

CHOICE OF FRIENDS

Narayana, the author of these parables, insists that we exercise caution when choosing our companions. His charming animal characters – sometimes silly, sometimes wise – remind us of ourselves. We learn to avoid the pitfalls of life, along with his animal characters, thus attaining wisdom in a rather enjoyable way! Most importantly, we realise the worth of an honest friend.

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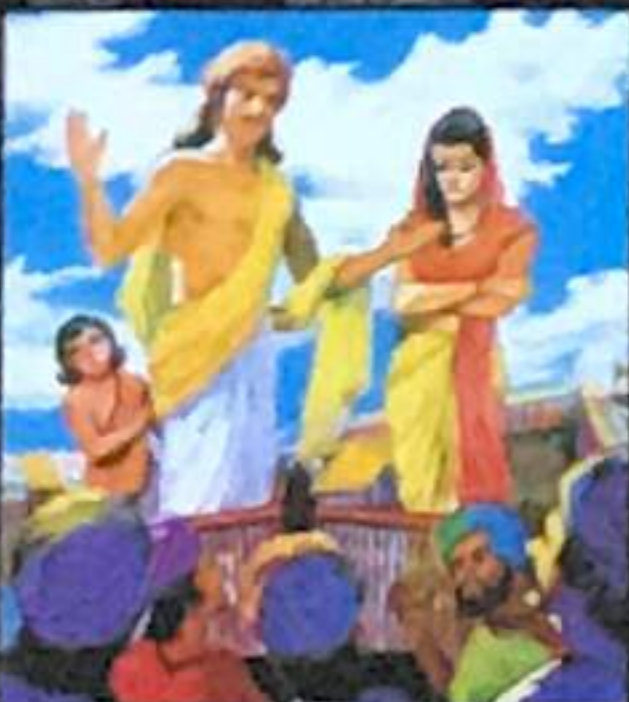


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CHOICE OF FRIENDS

TALES FROM THE HITOPADESCHA

Vol 556 | ₹50



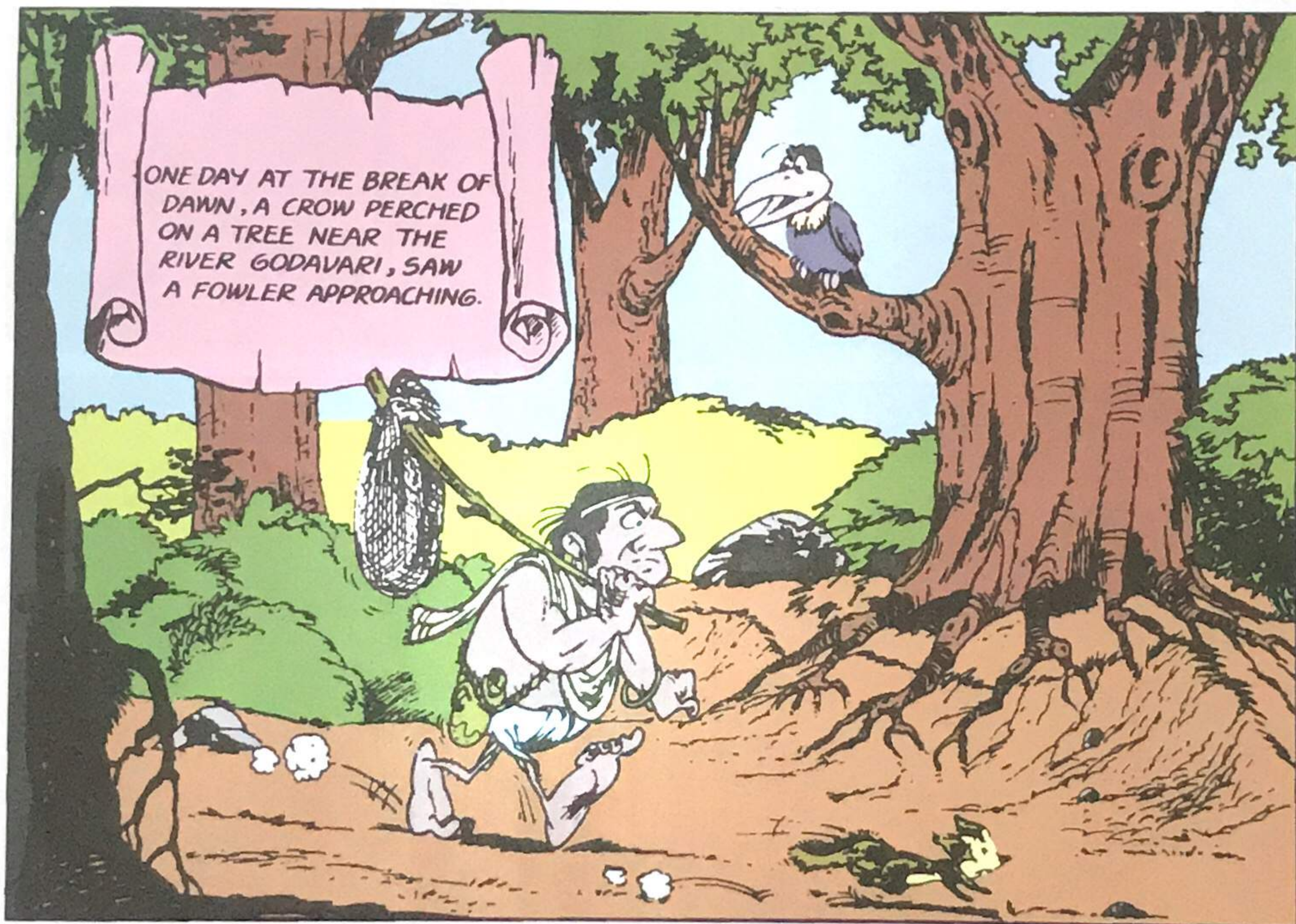
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CHOICE OF FRIENDS

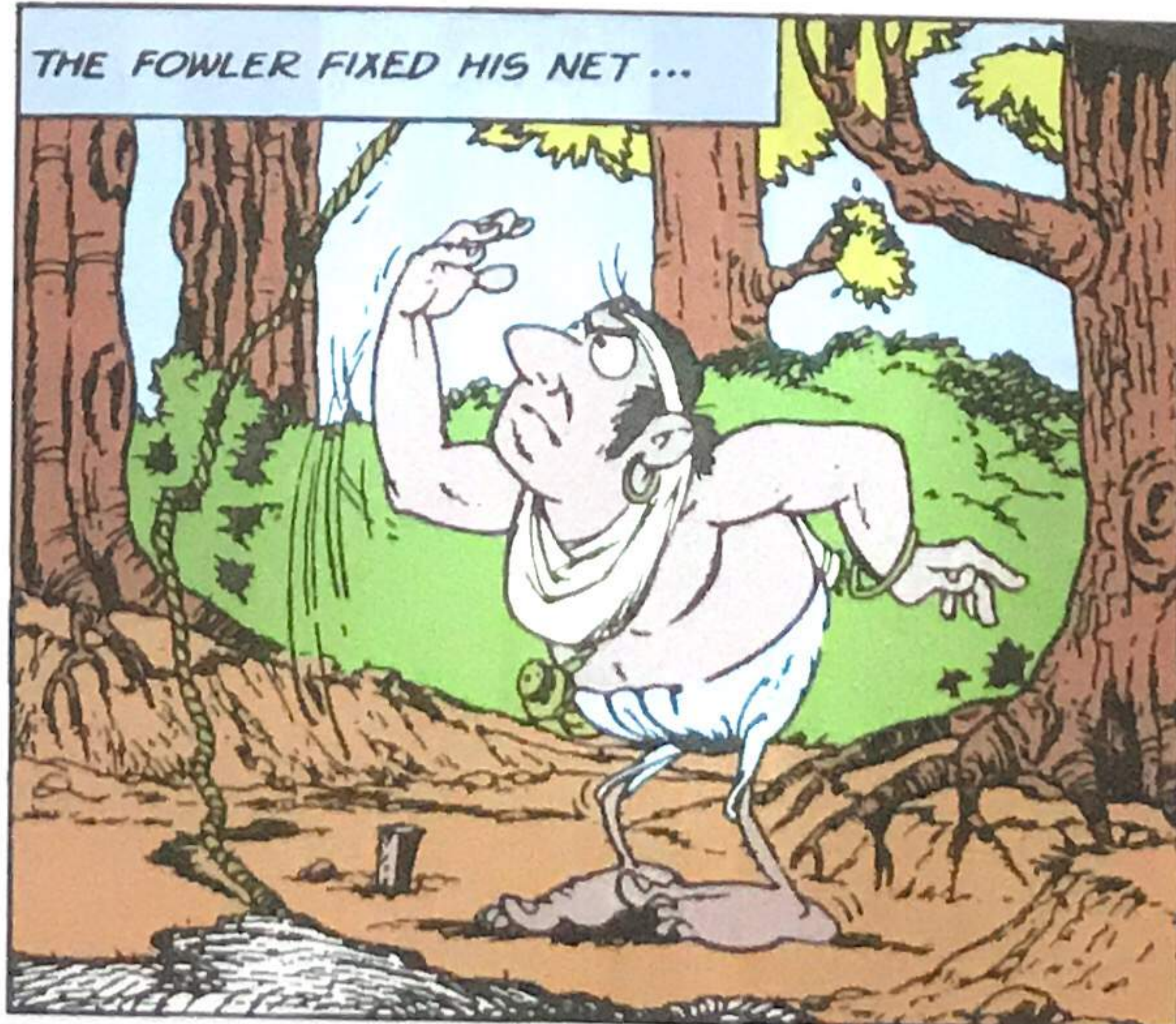
ONE DAY AT THE BREAK OF DAWN, A CROW PERCHED ON A TREE NEAR THE RIVER GODAVARI, SAW A FOWLER APPROACHING.



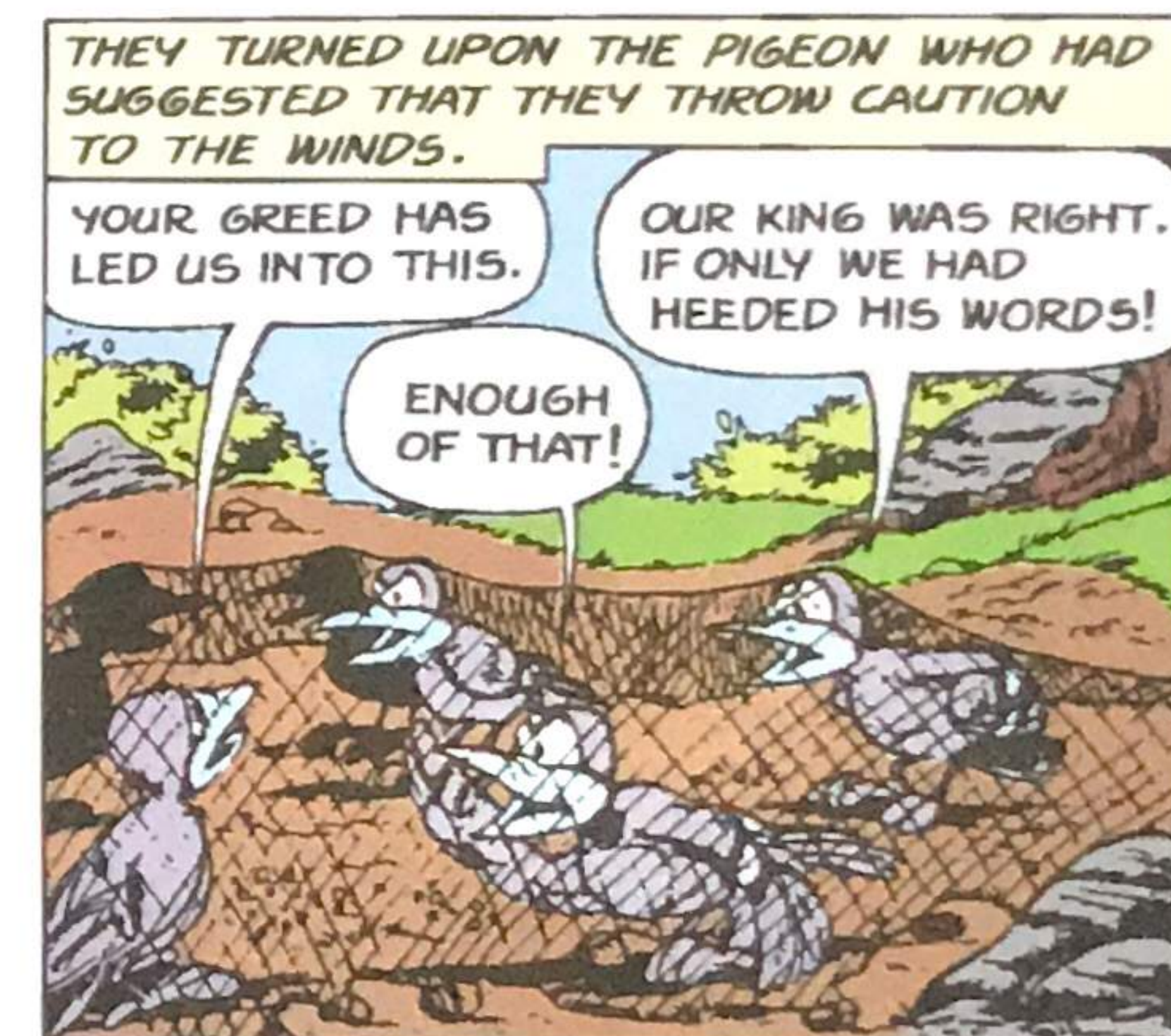
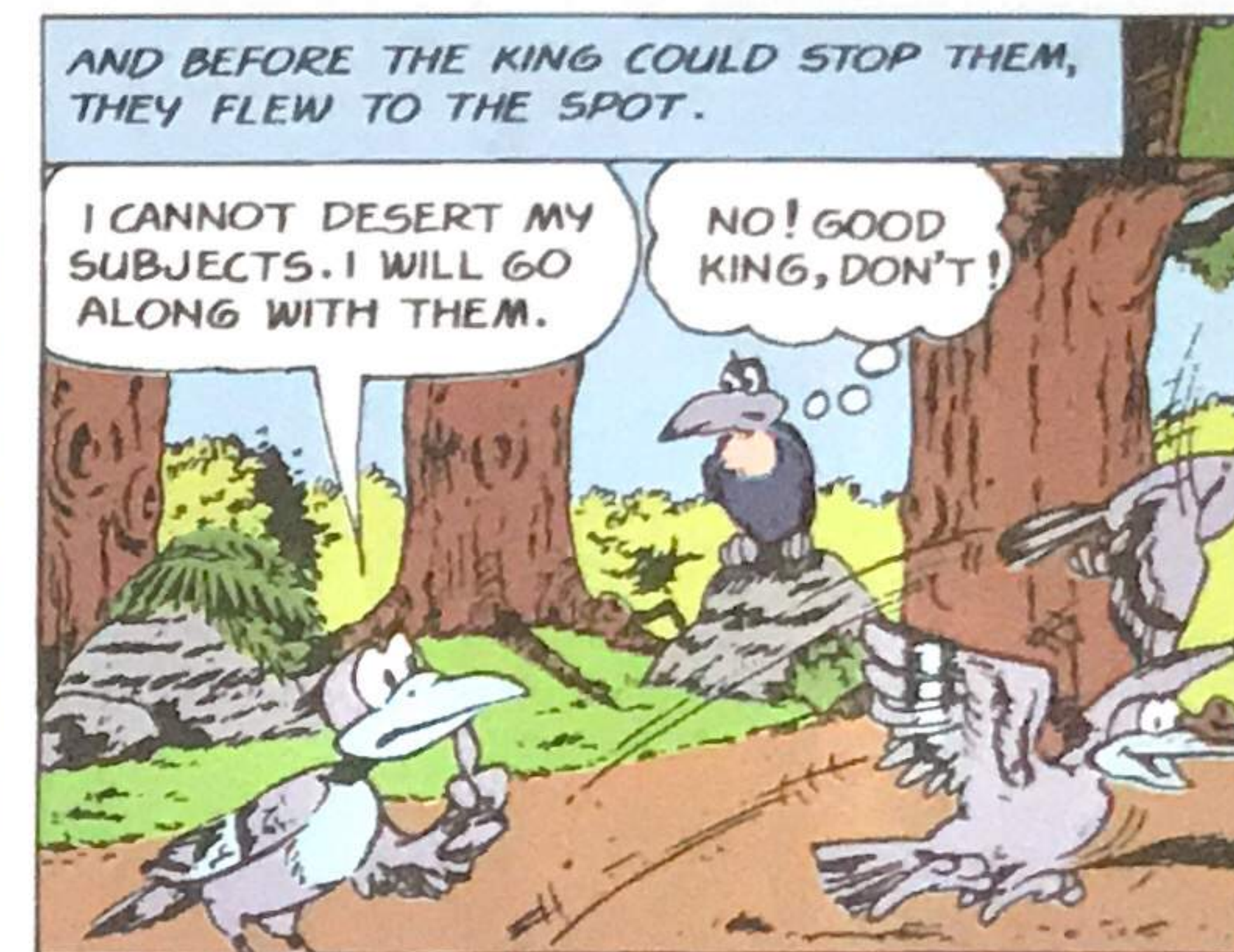
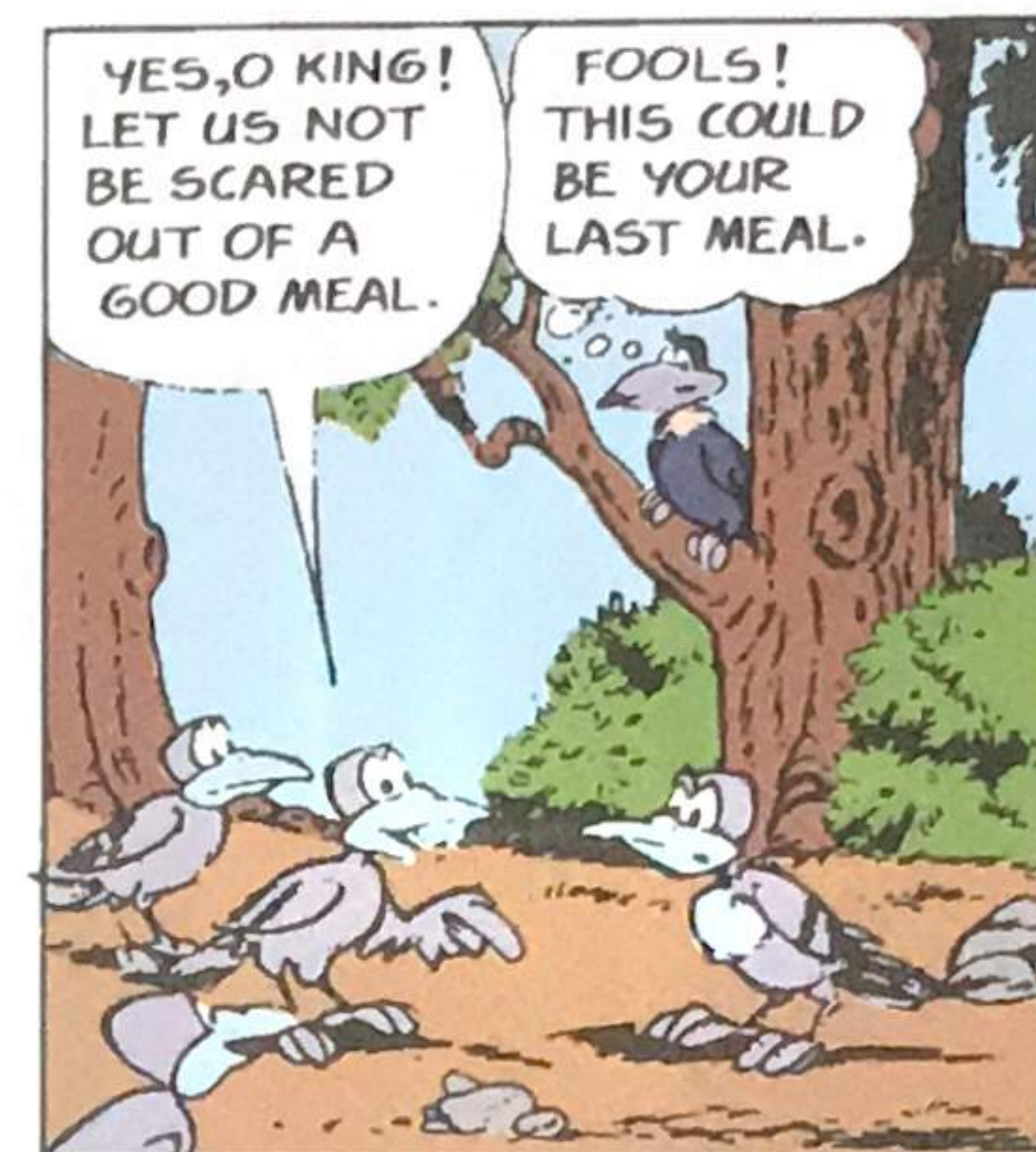
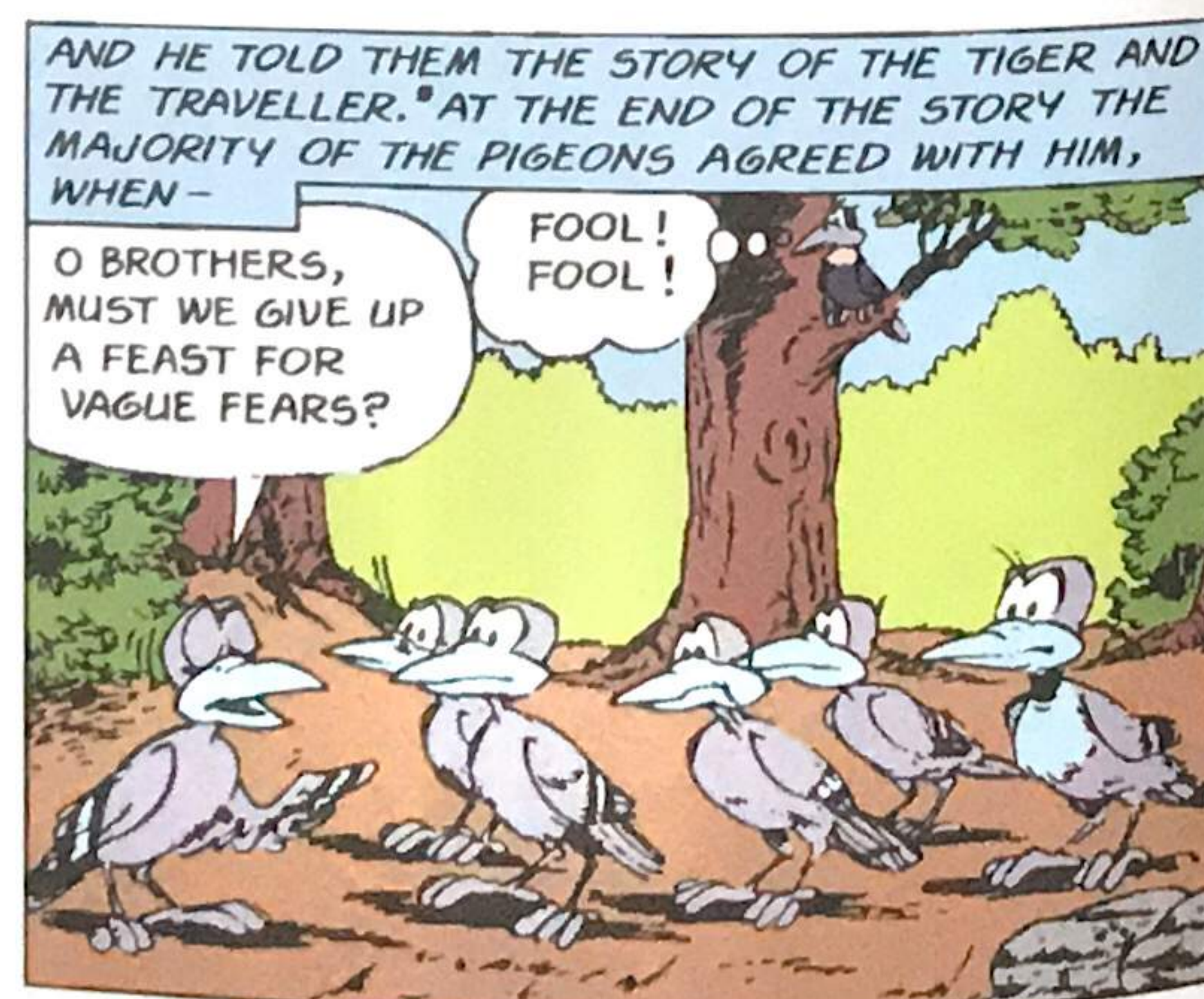
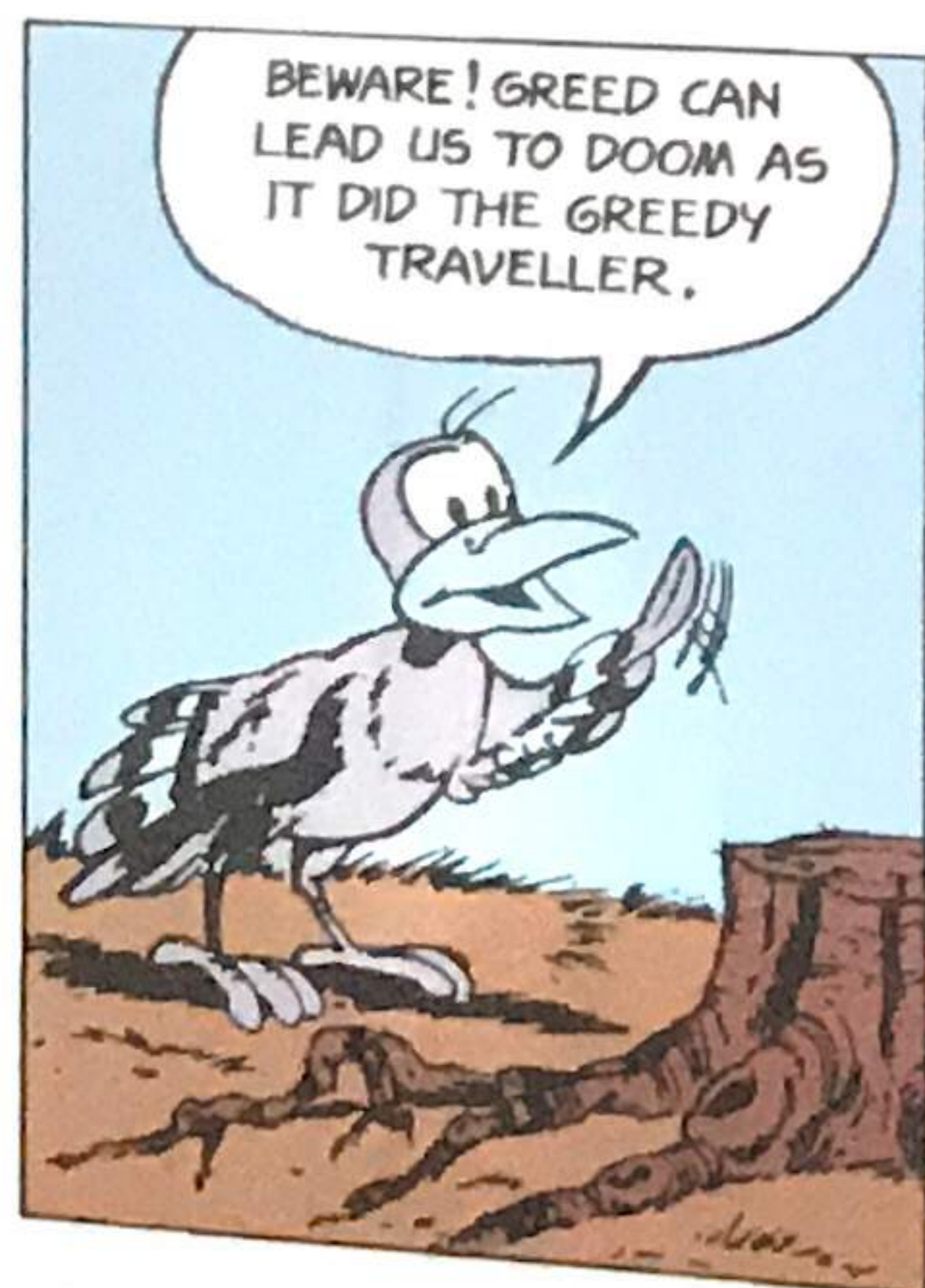
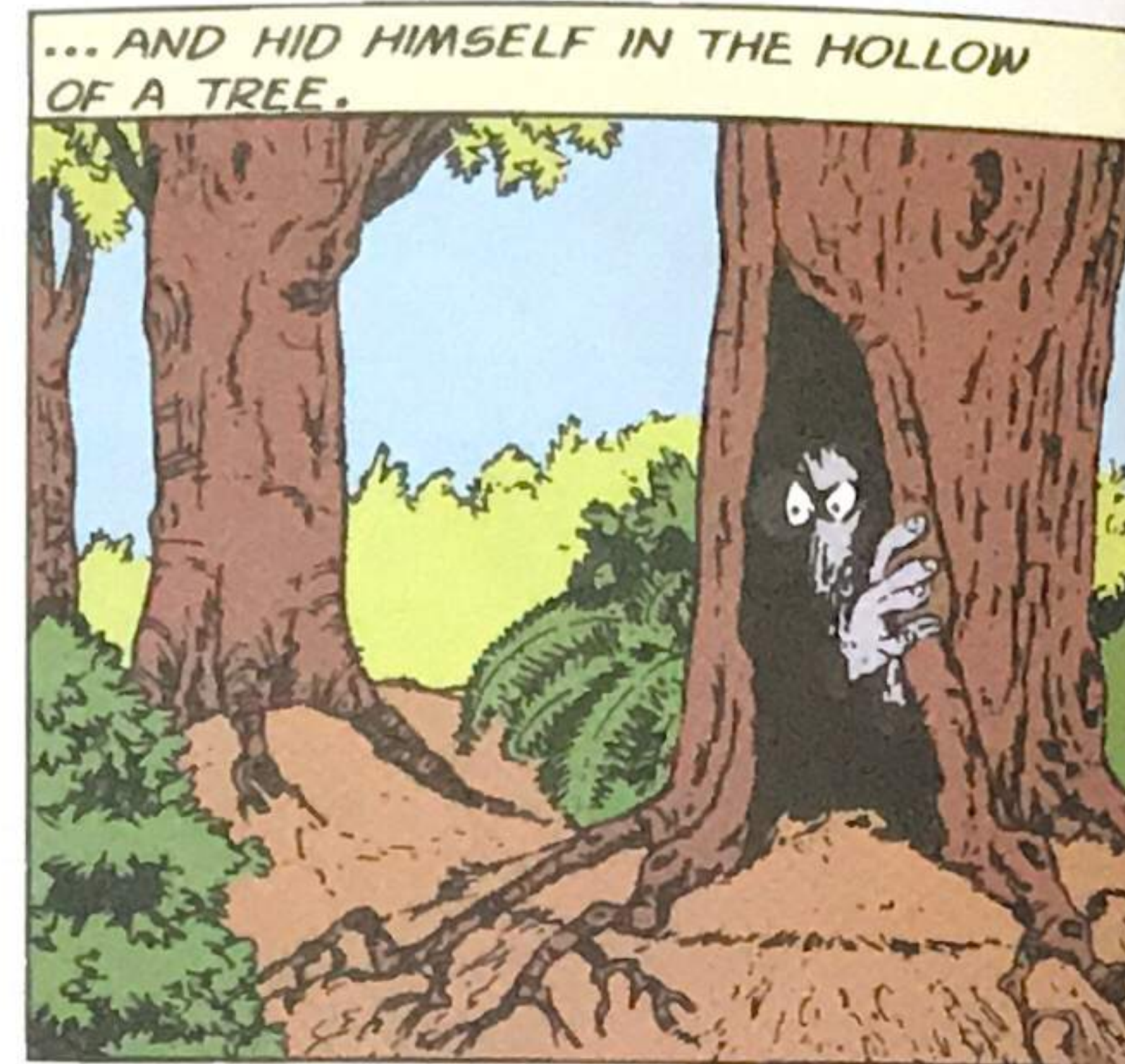
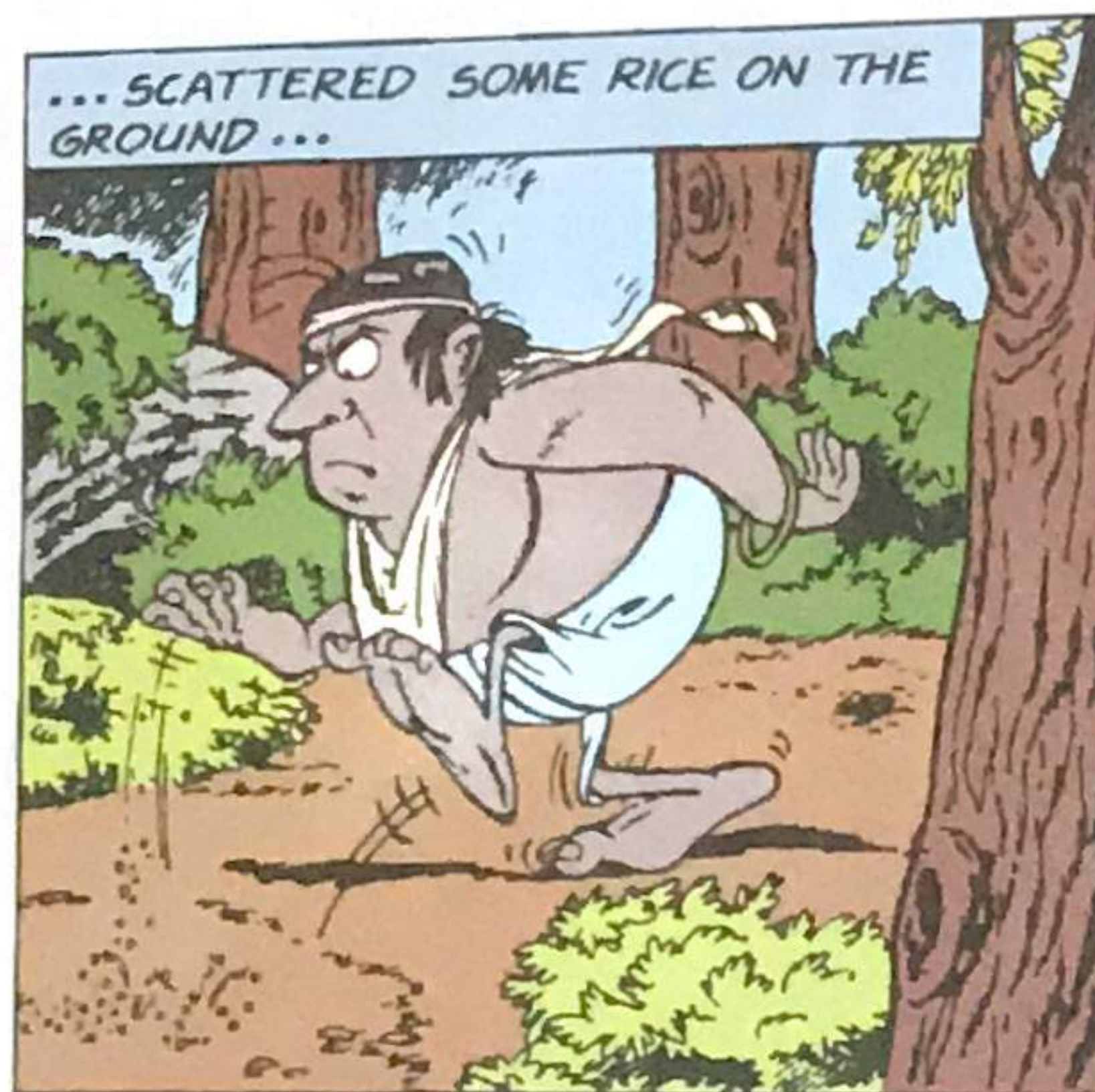
O LORD! HERE COMES YAMA* IN PERSON. I WONDER WHAT HE IS UP TO.

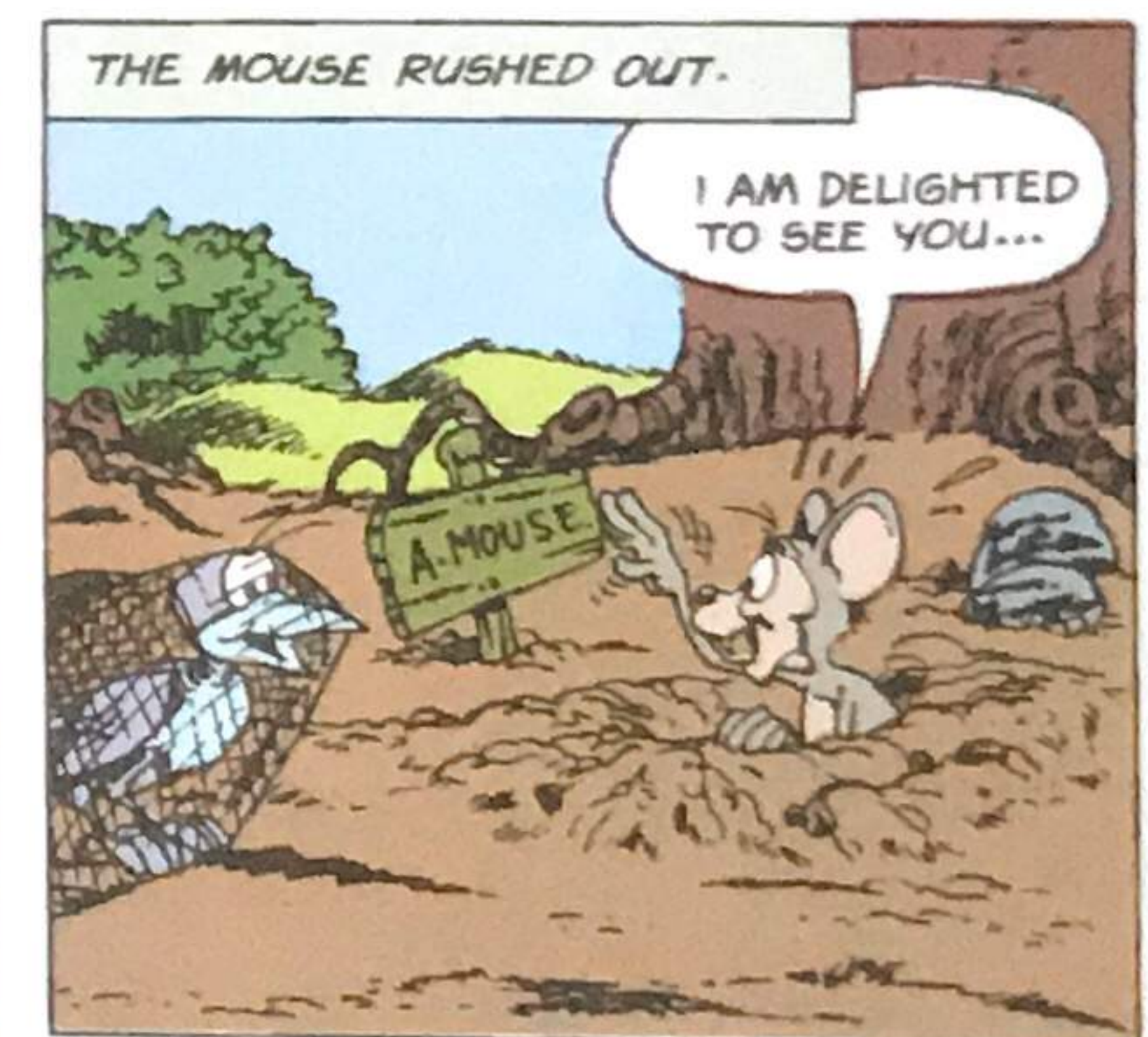
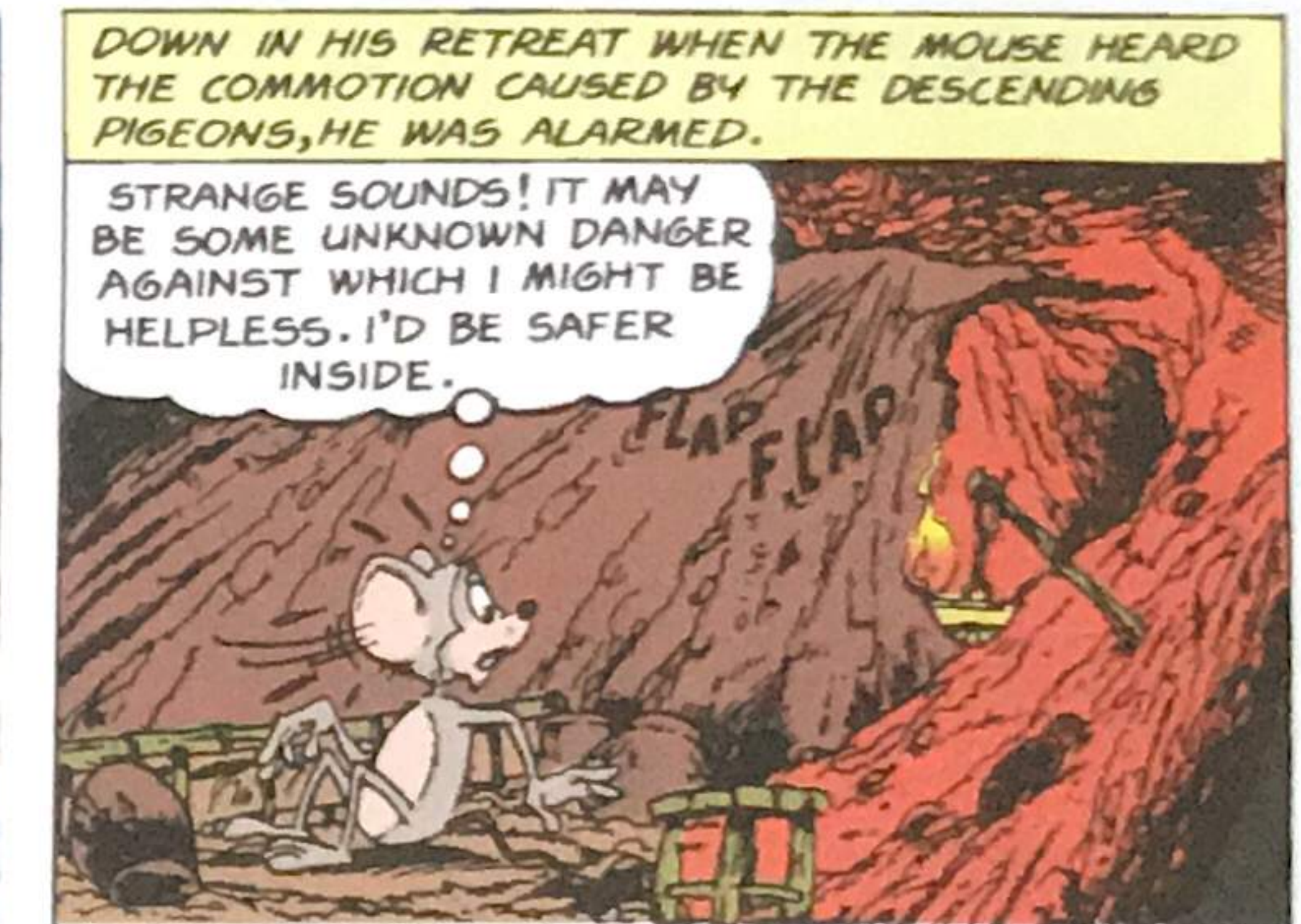
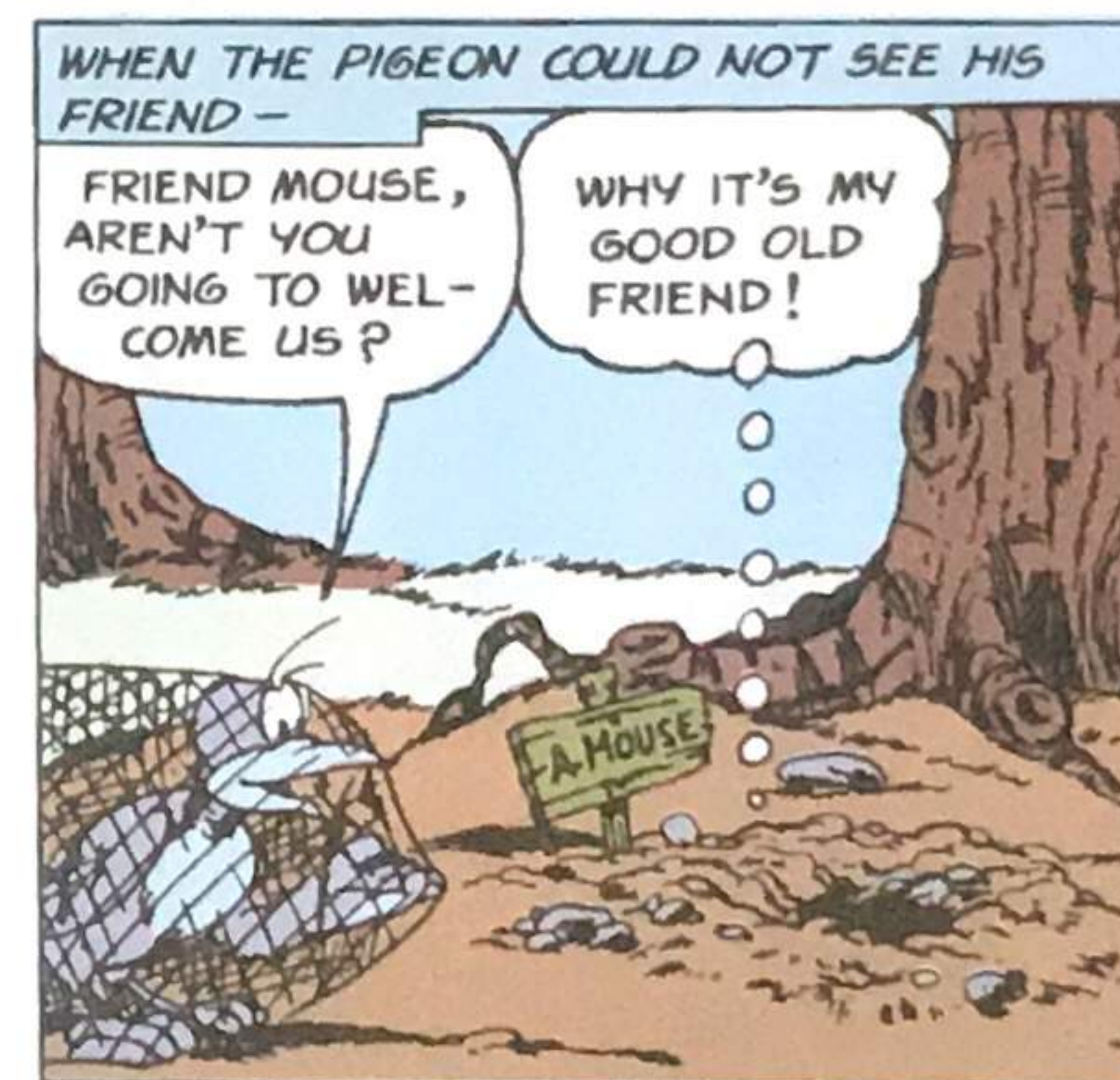
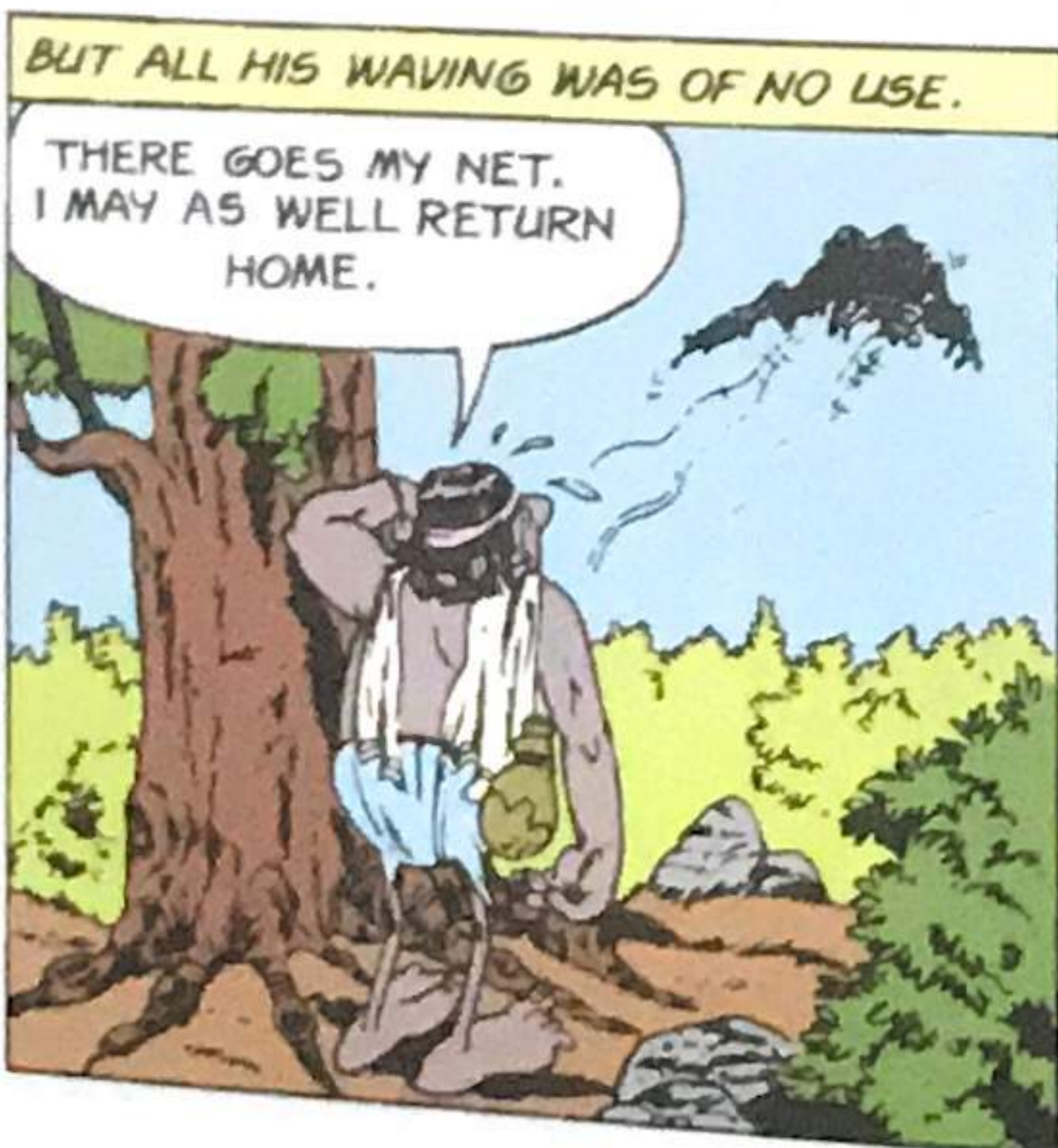
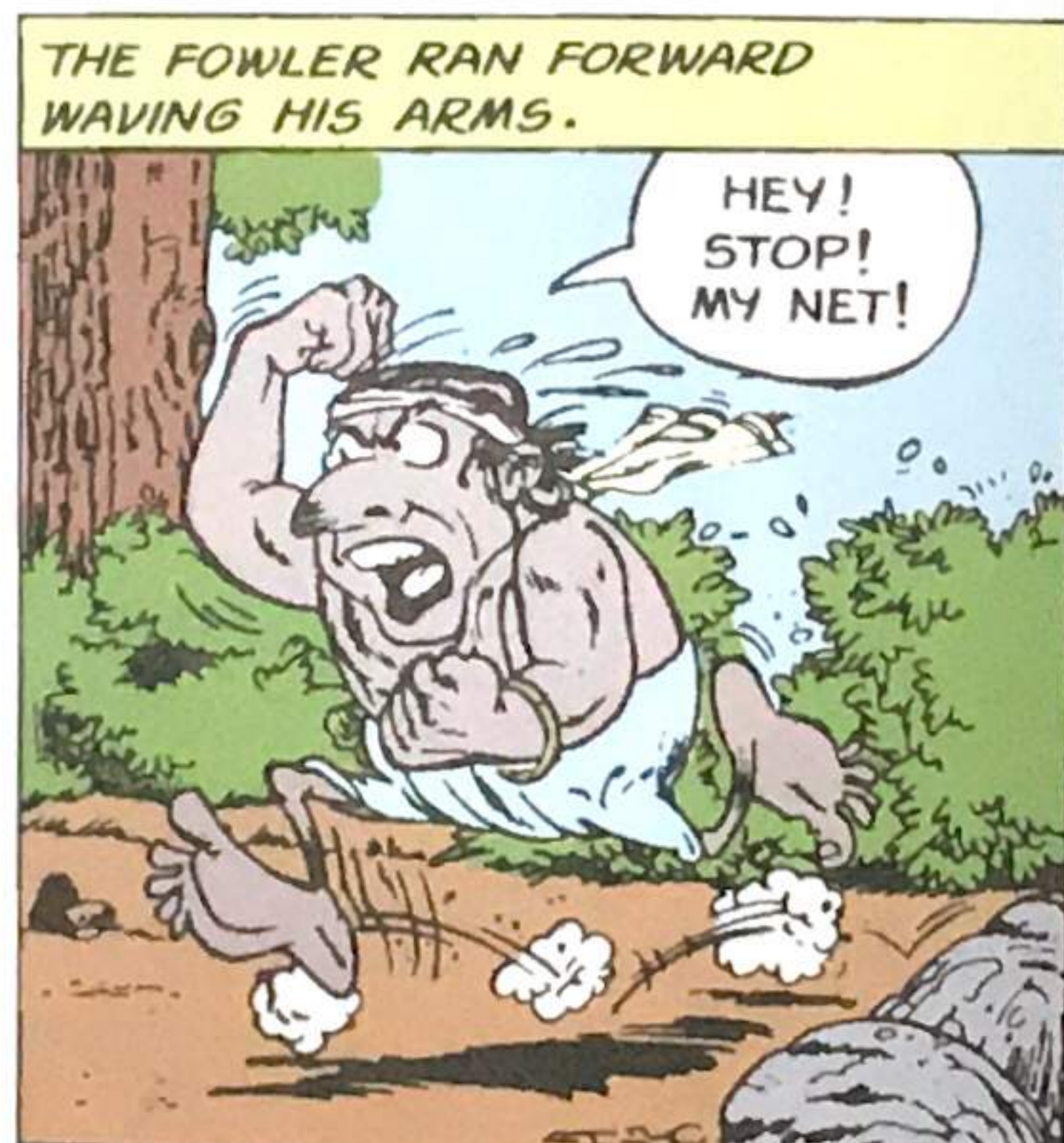
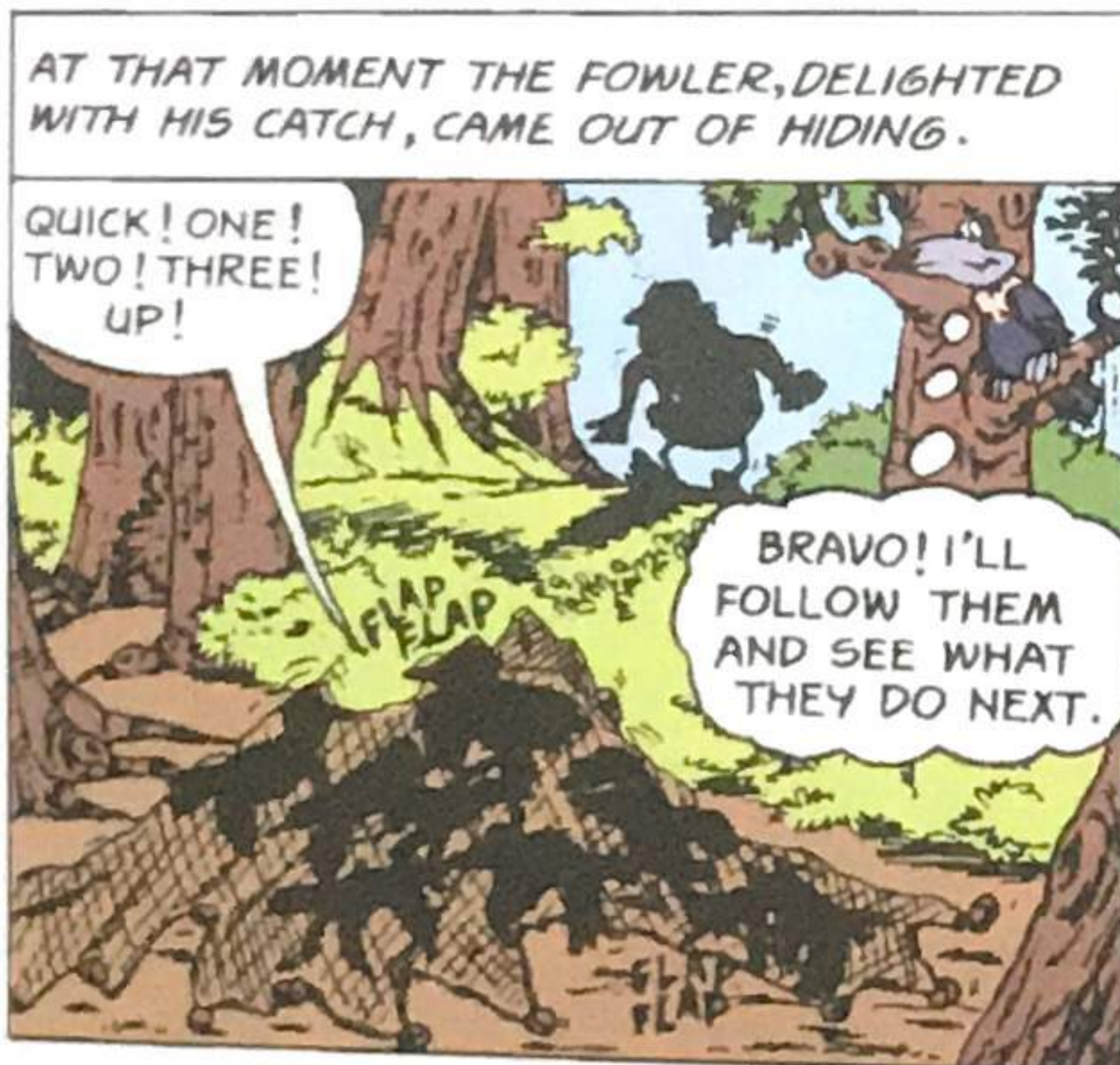


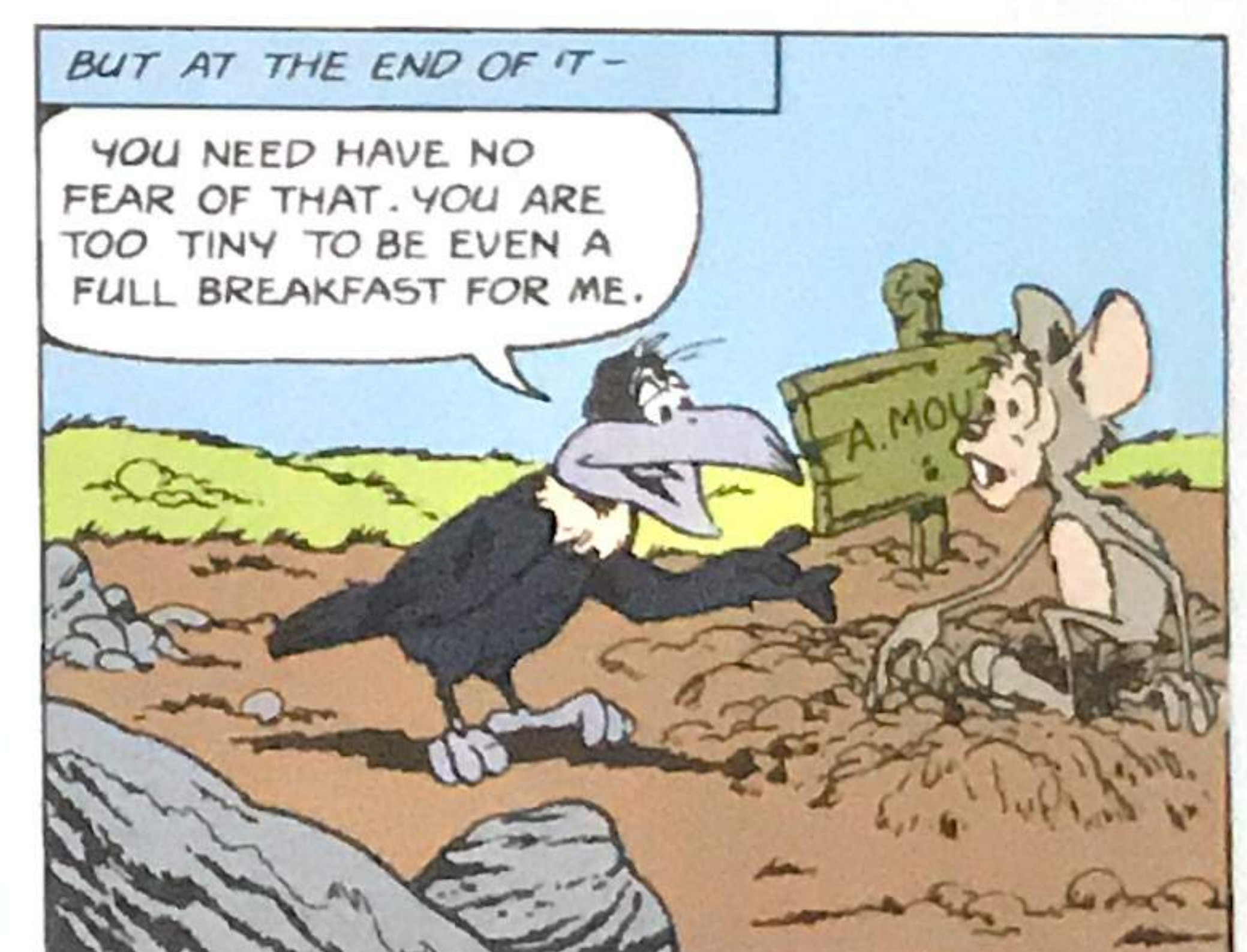
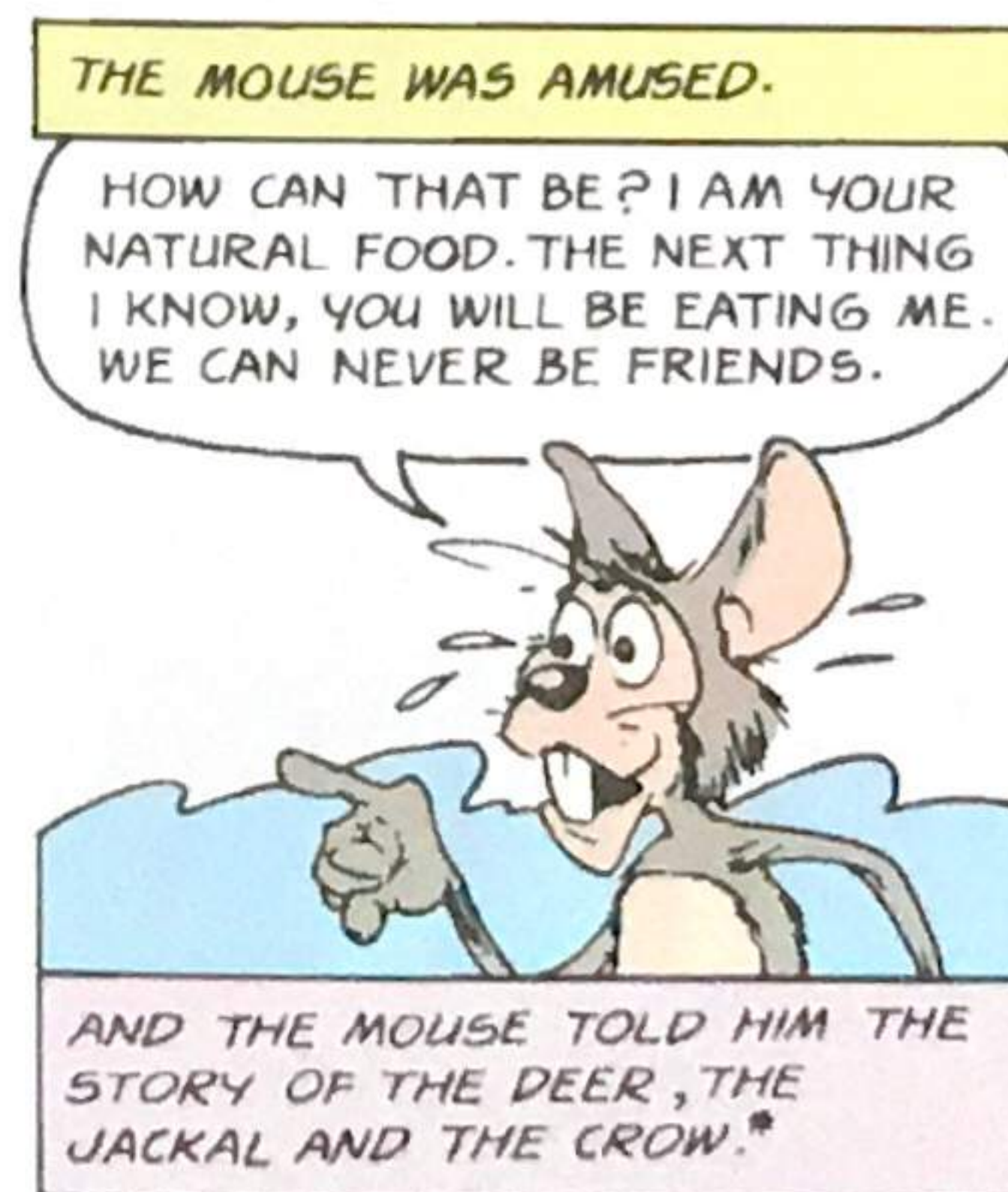
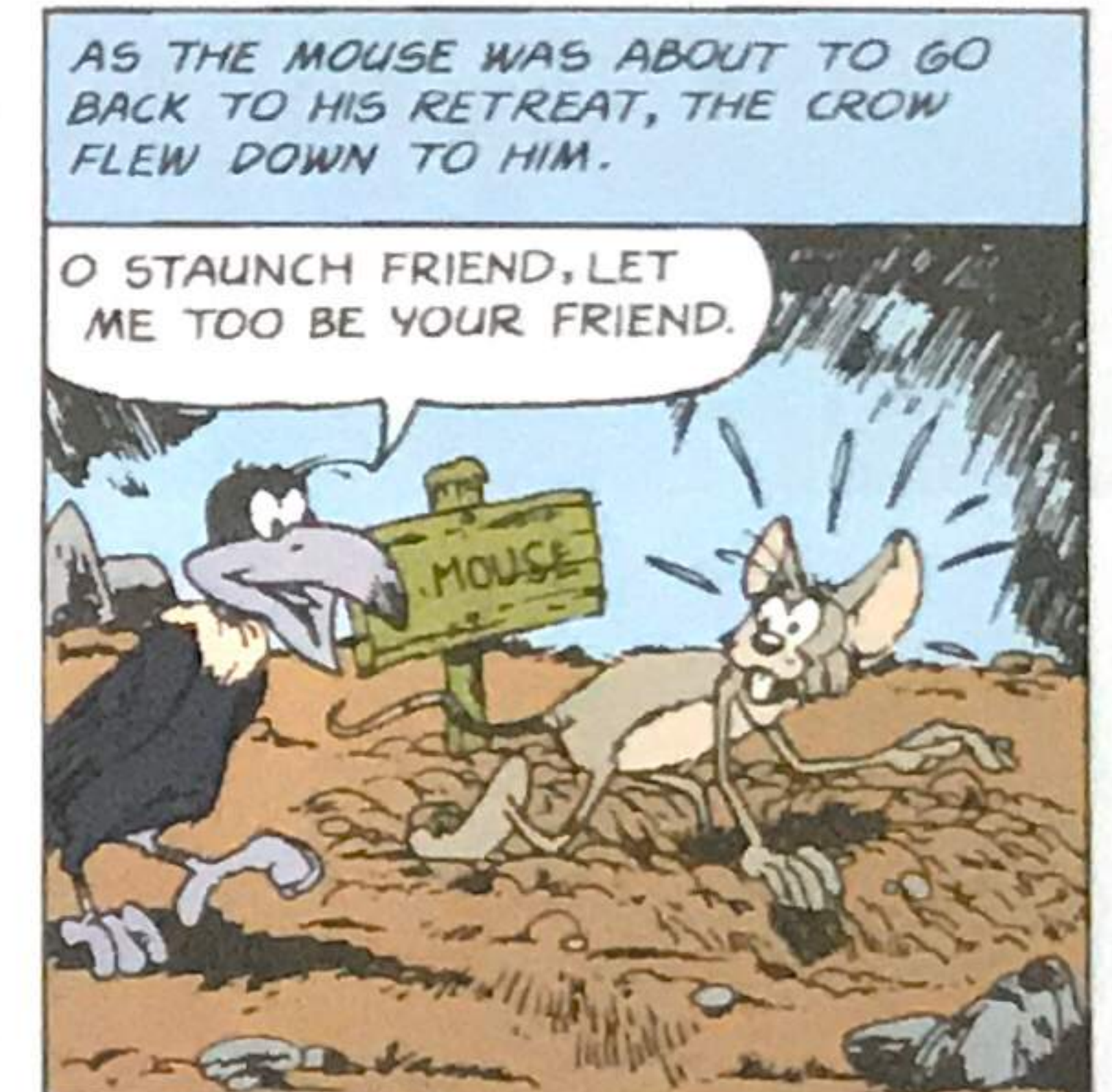
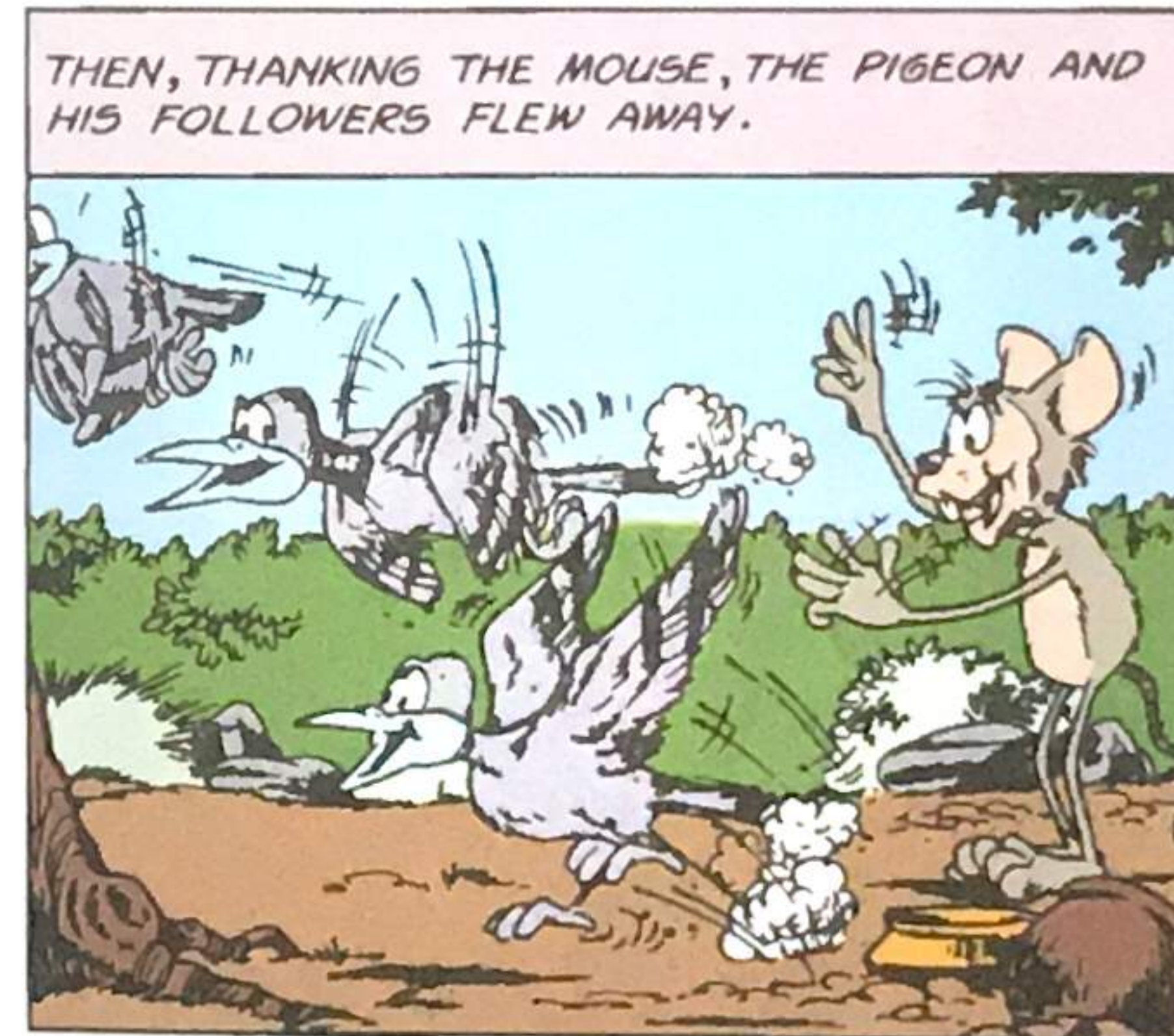
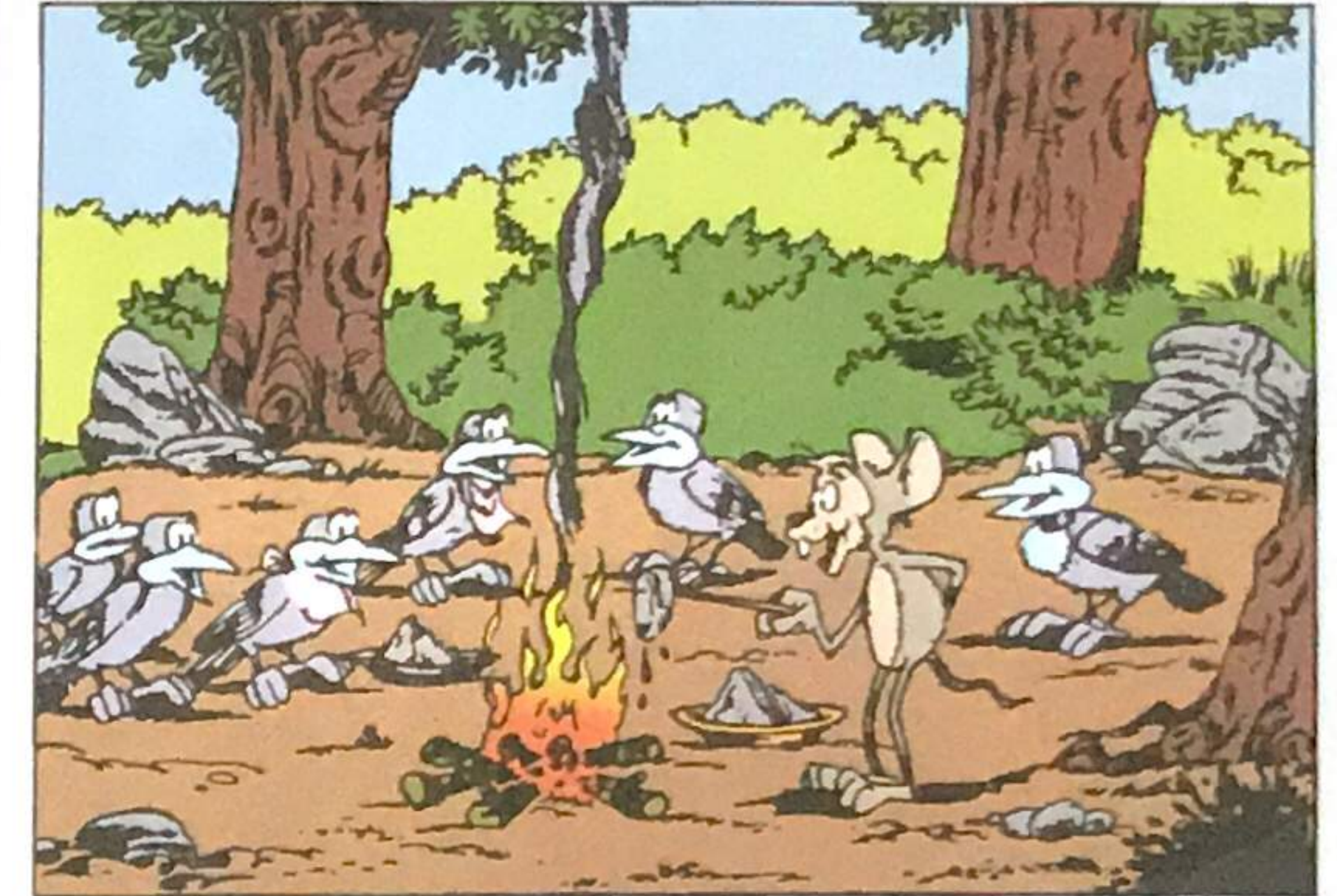
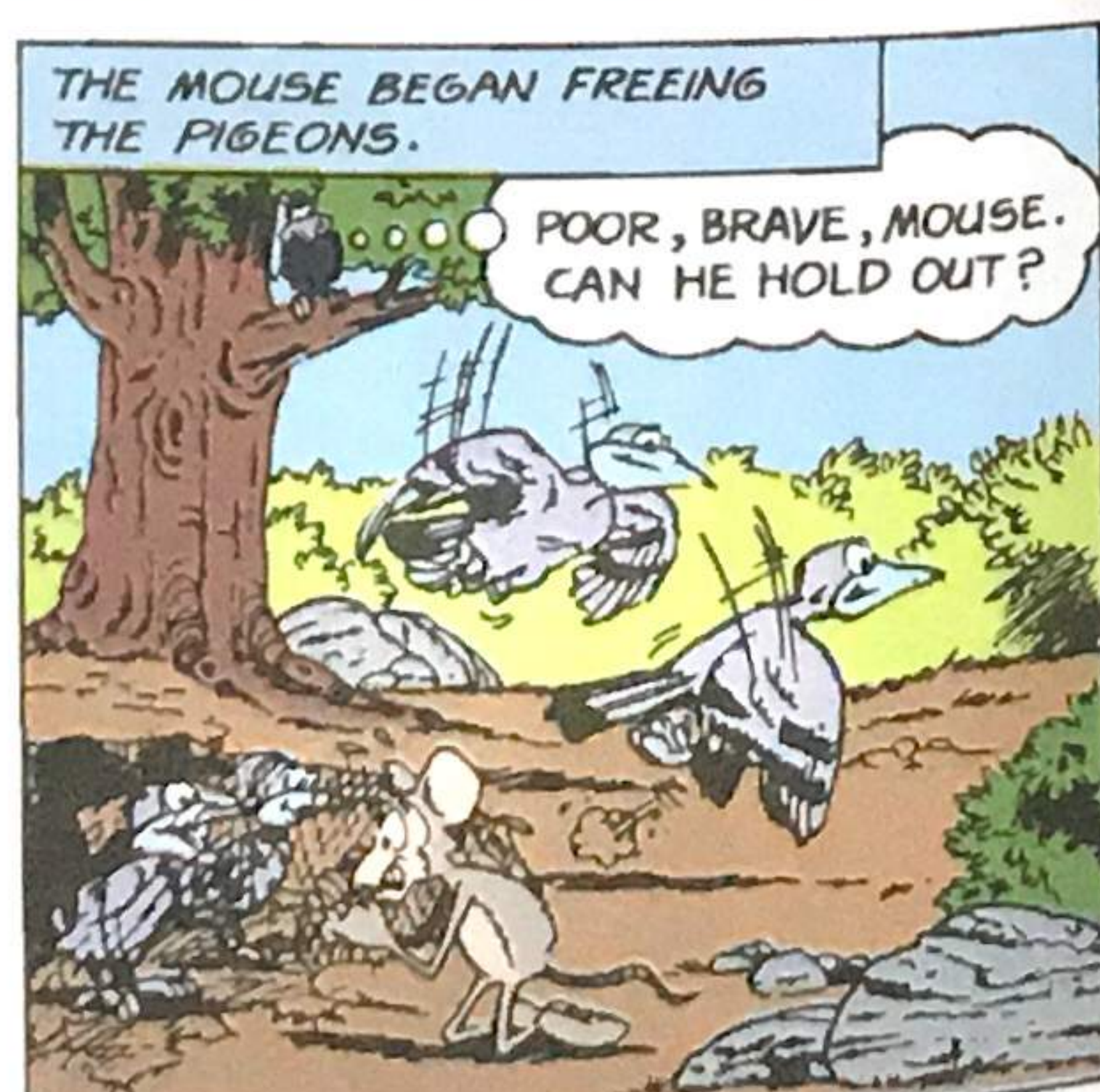
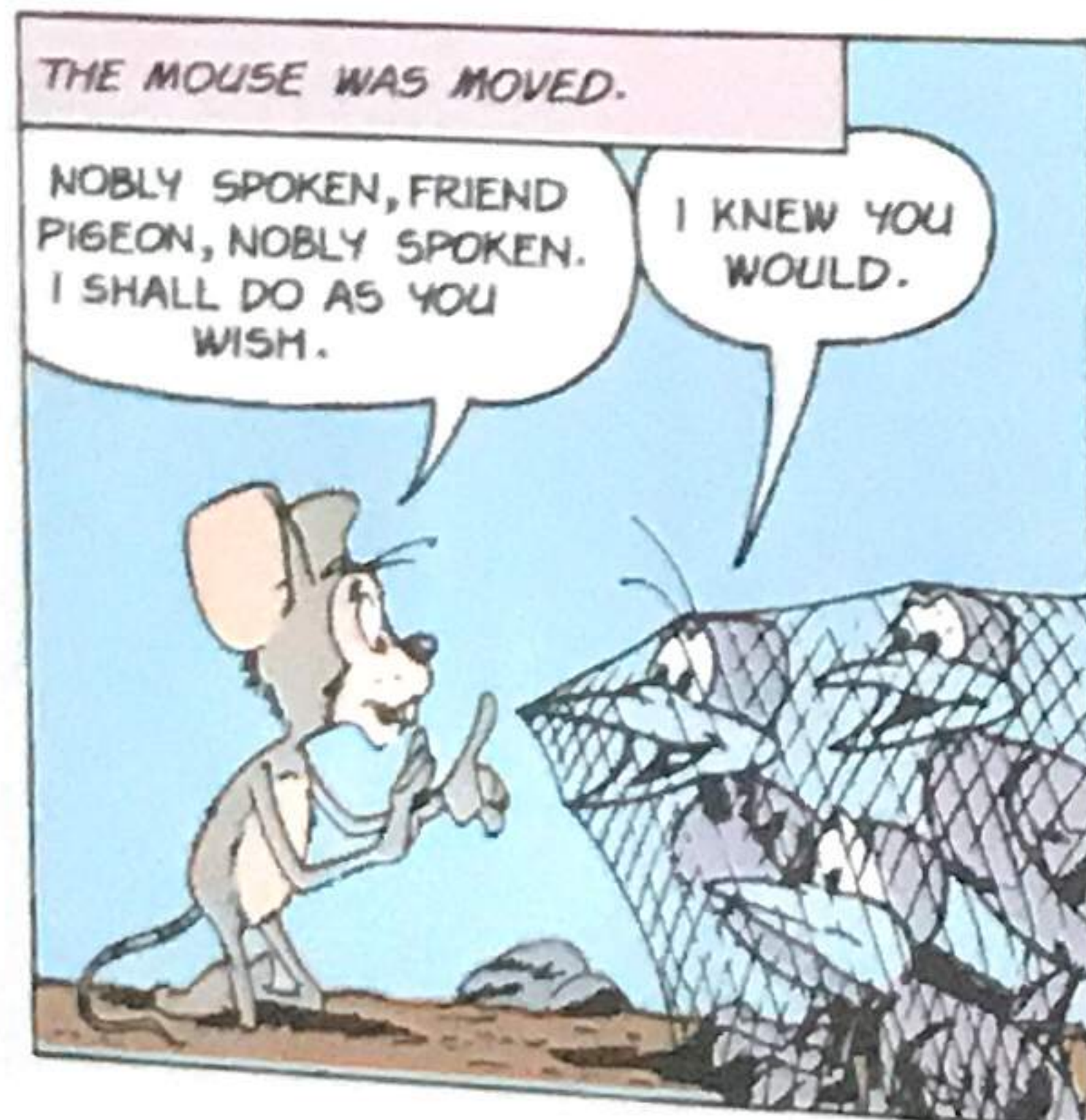
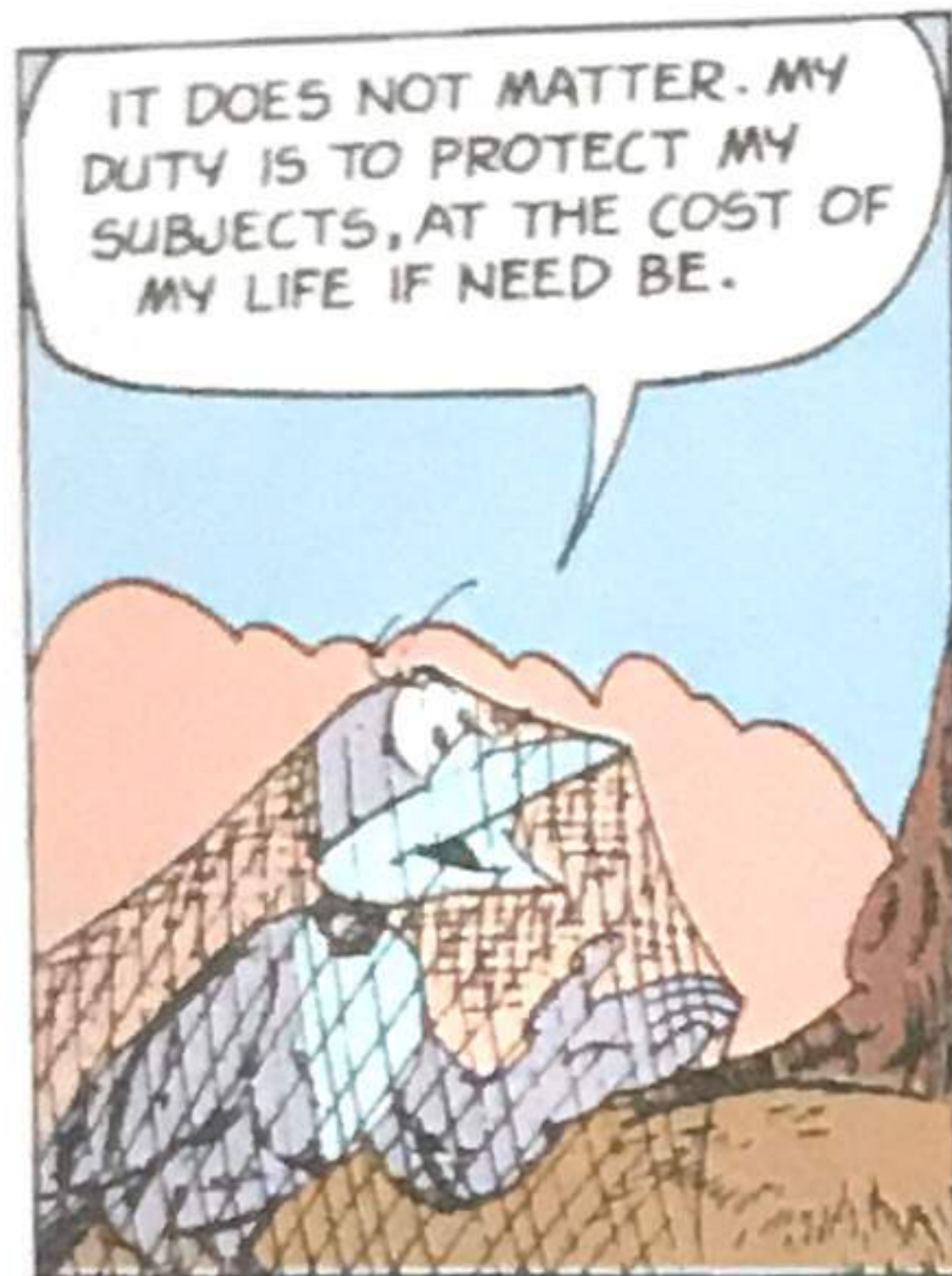
THE FOWLER FIXED HIS NET ...

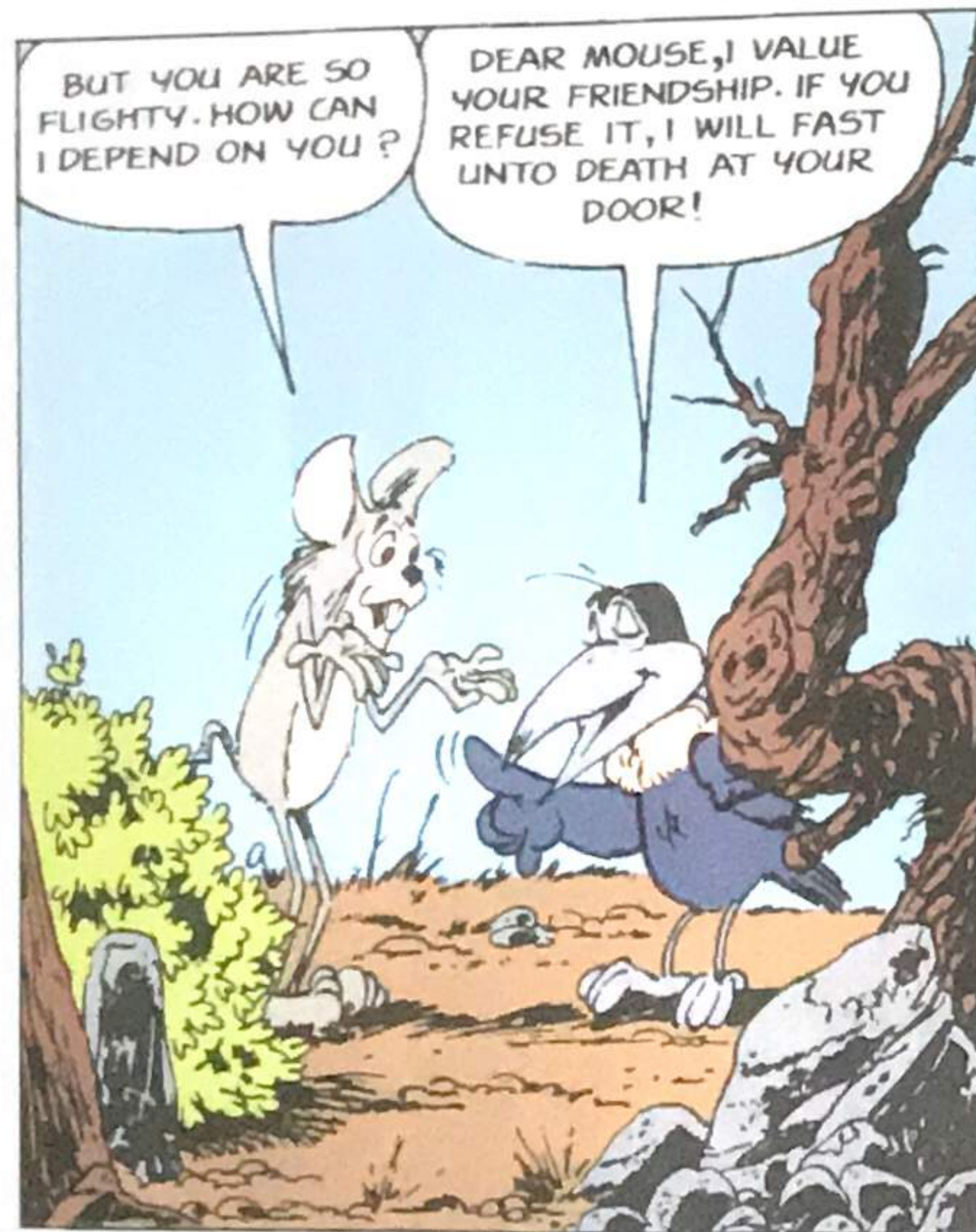


* THE GOD OF DEATH.

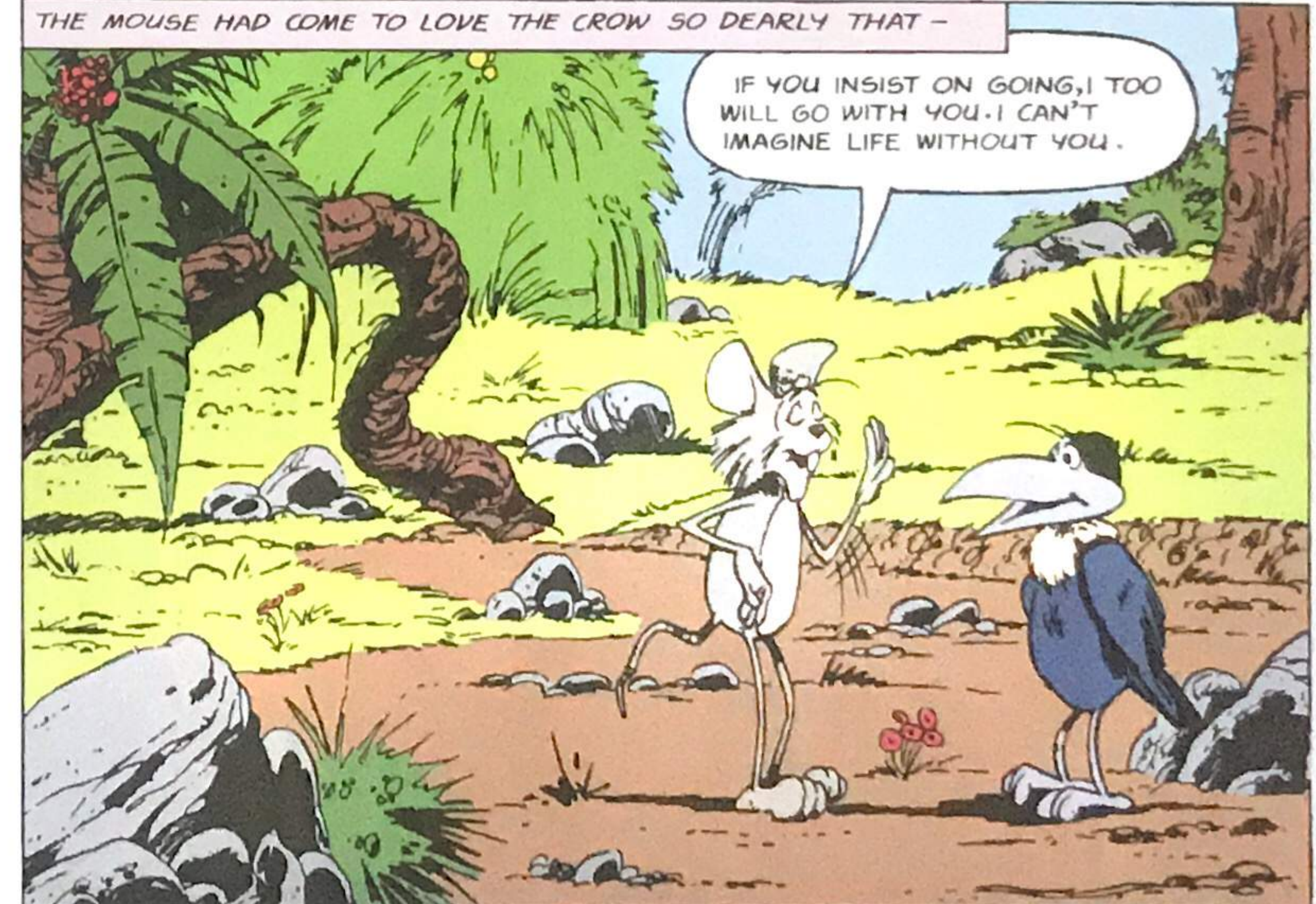
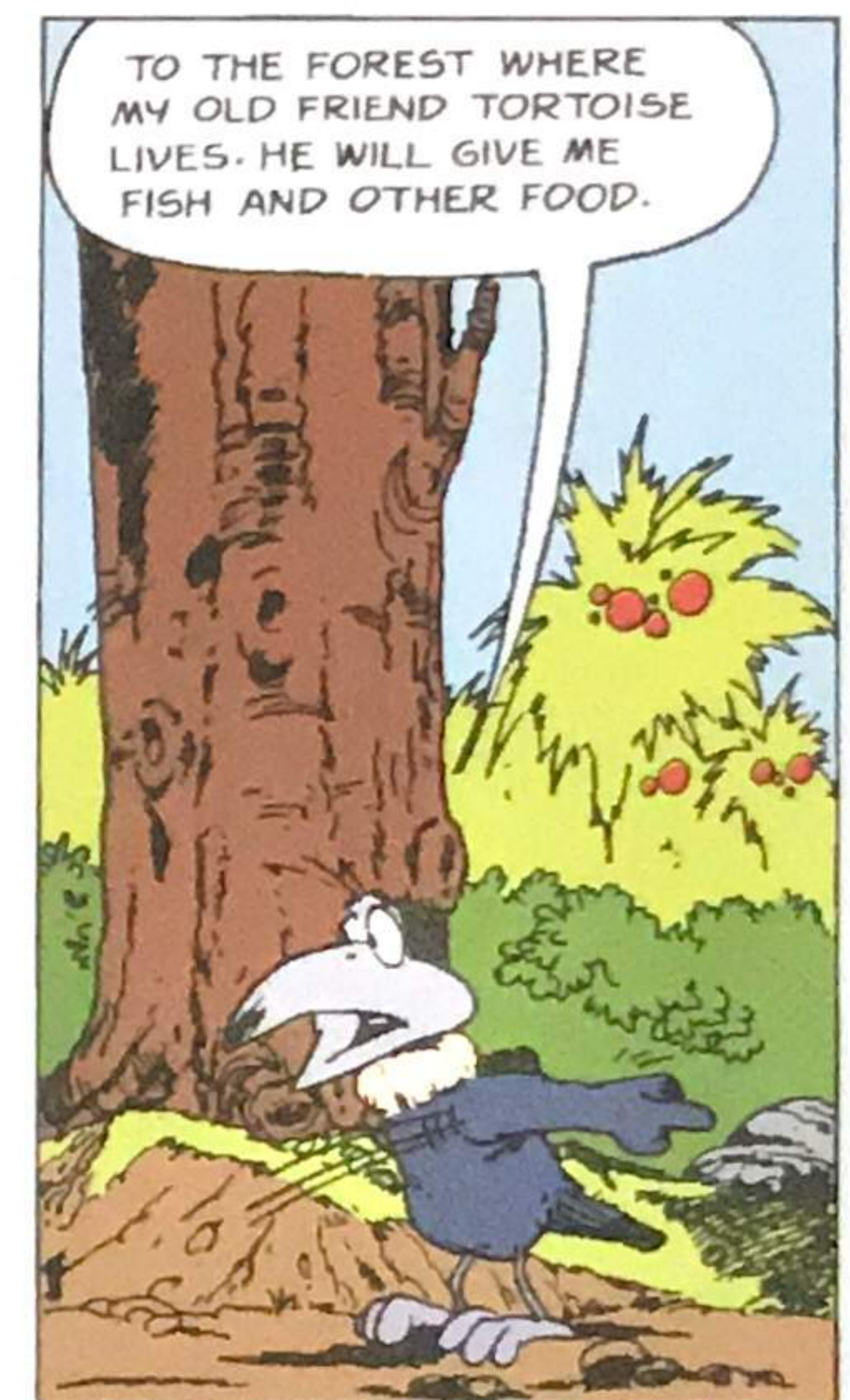
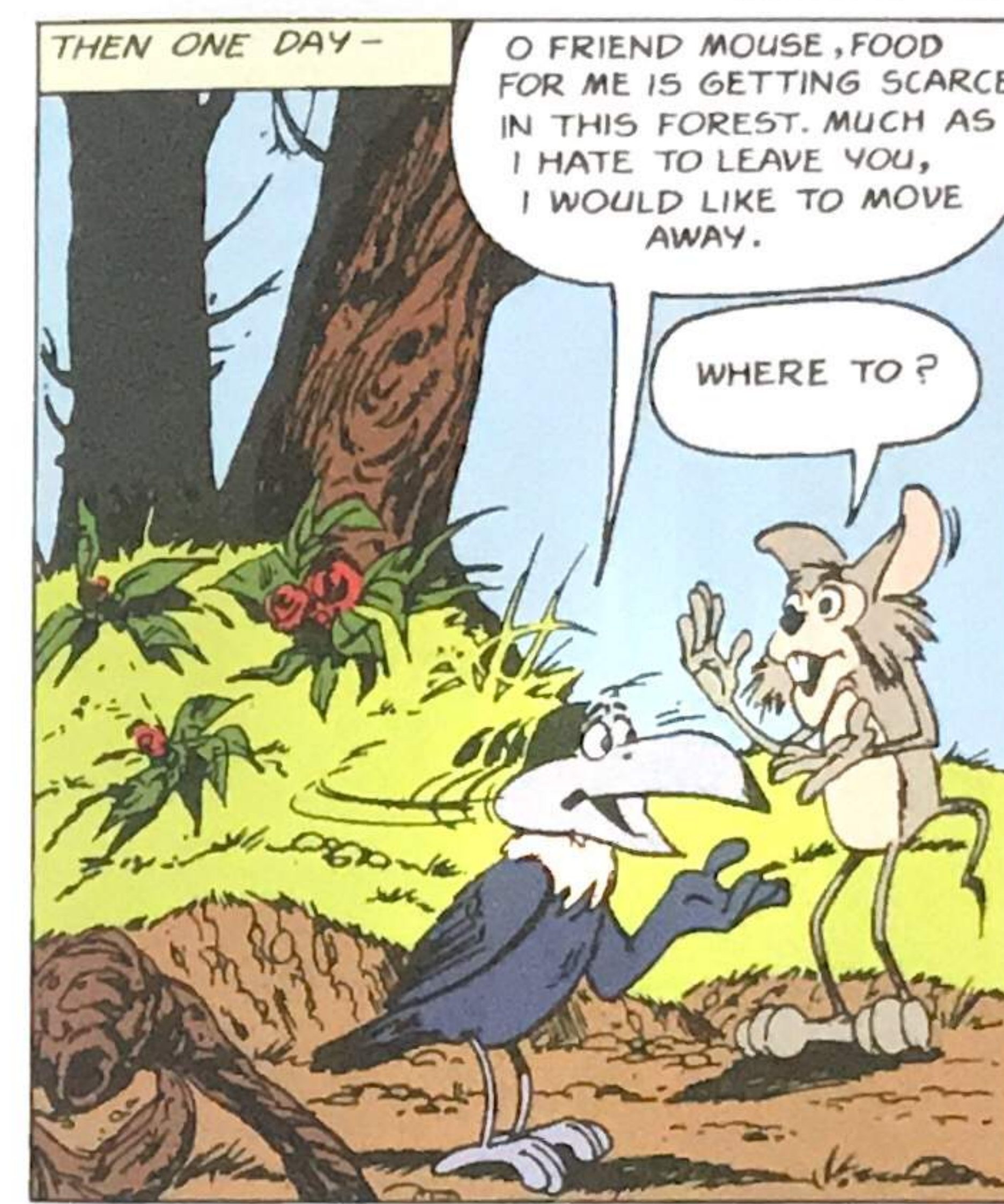
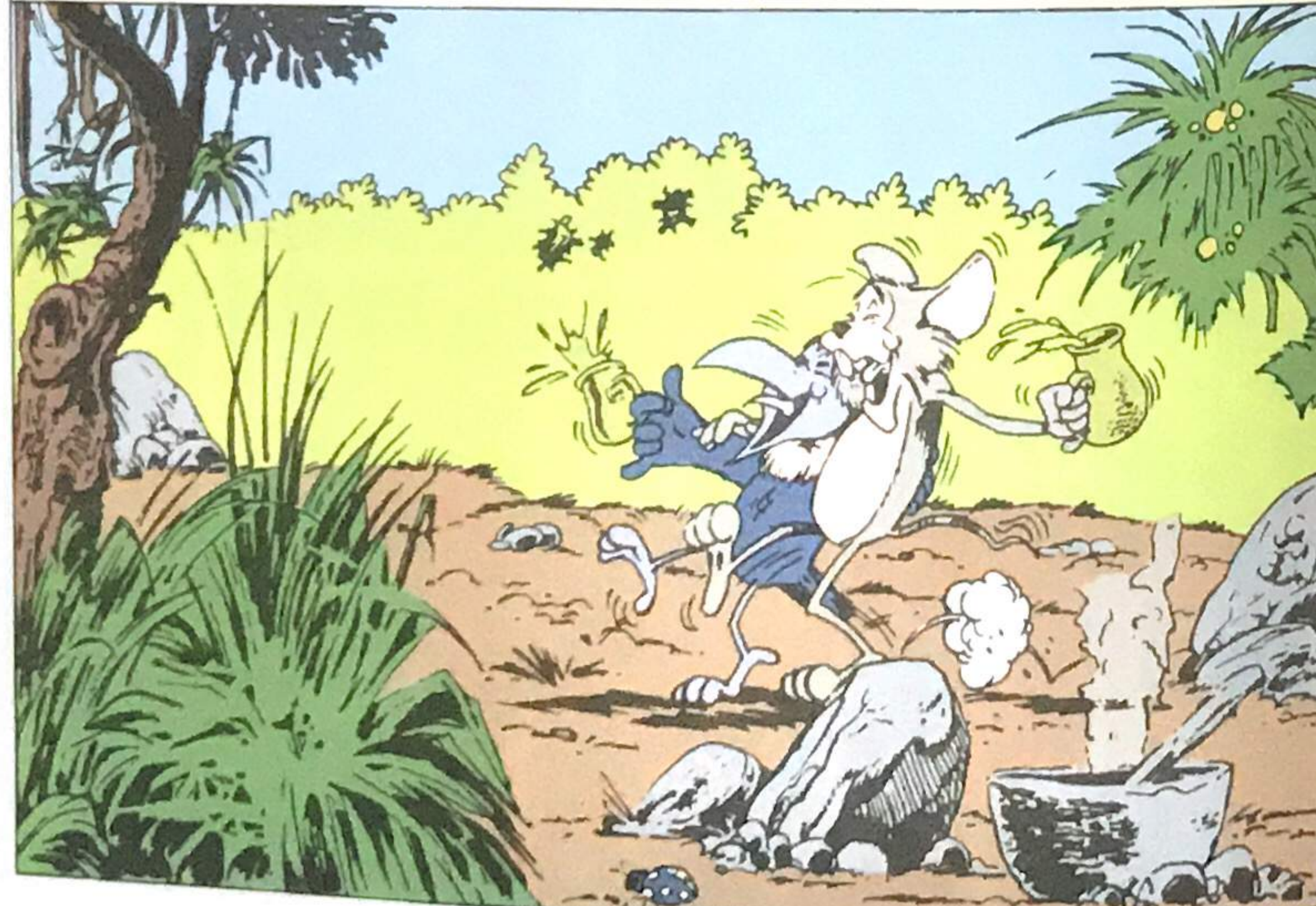








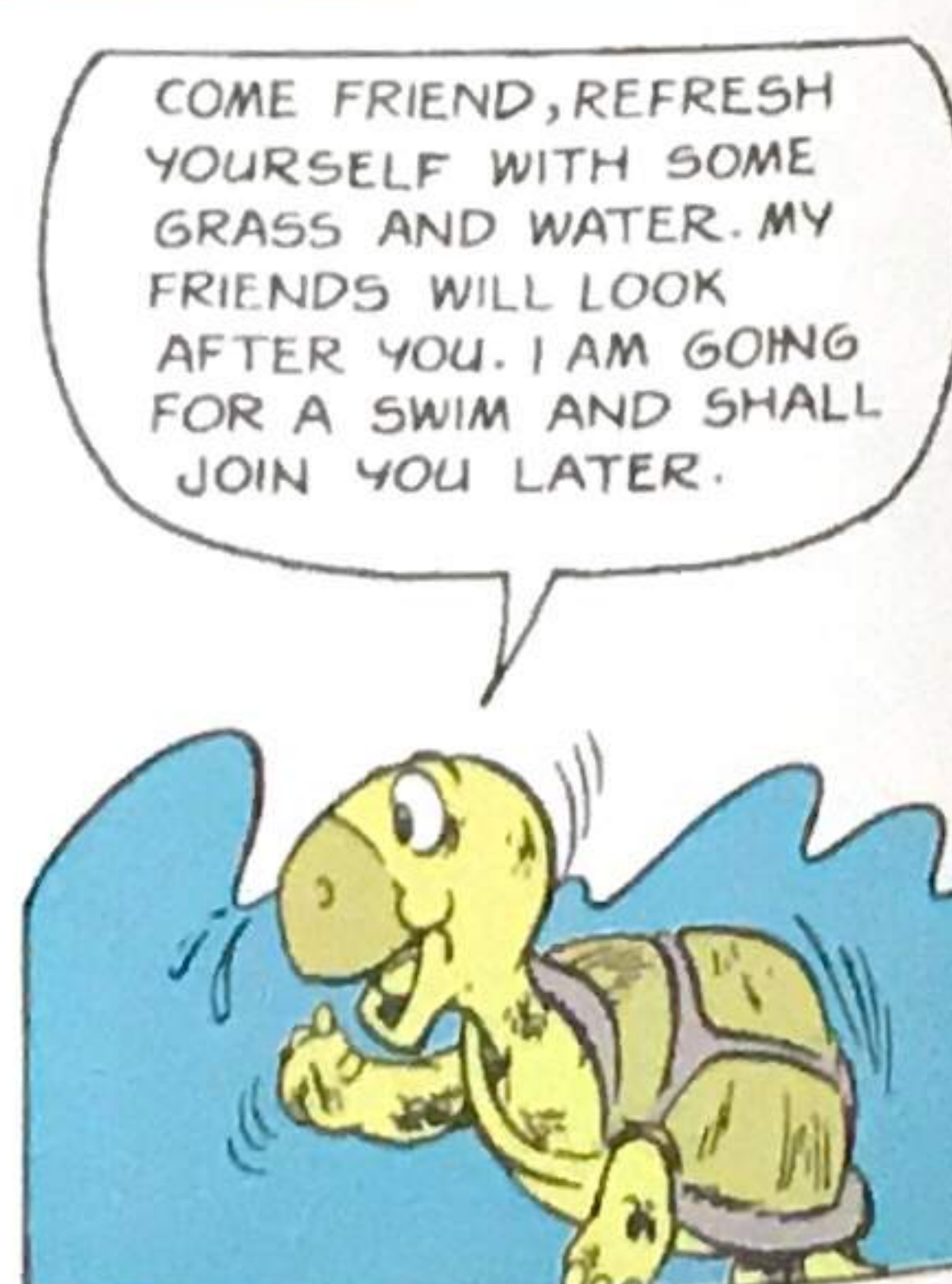
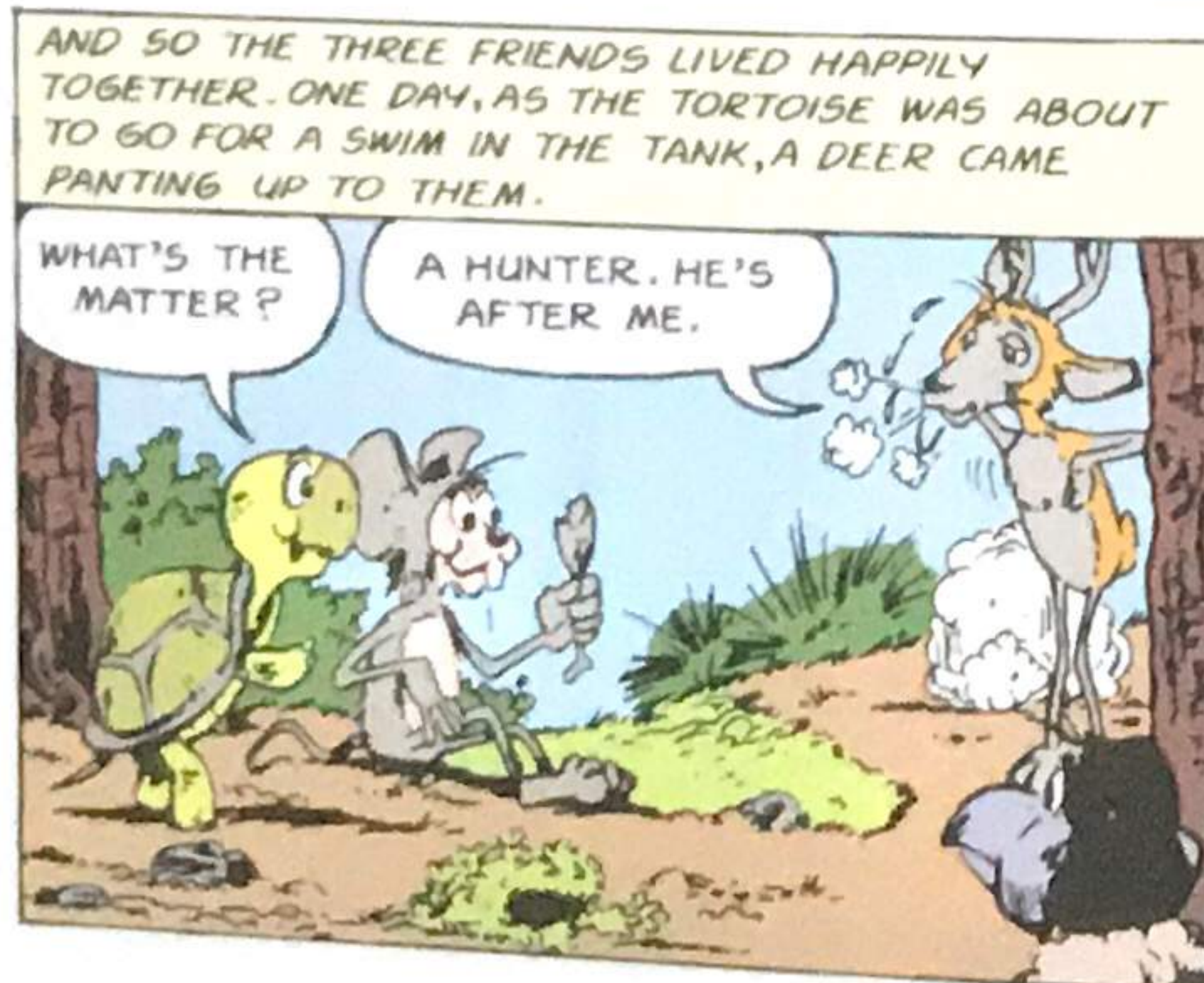
AND FROM THAT DAY THE TWO BECAME THE BEST OF FRIENDS, GIVING EACH OTHER THEIR CHOICE PICKINGS OF FOOD AND ANIMAL GOSSIP.



SO THE TWO FRIENDS SET OFF FOR THE FOREST WHERE THE TORTOISE LIVED.



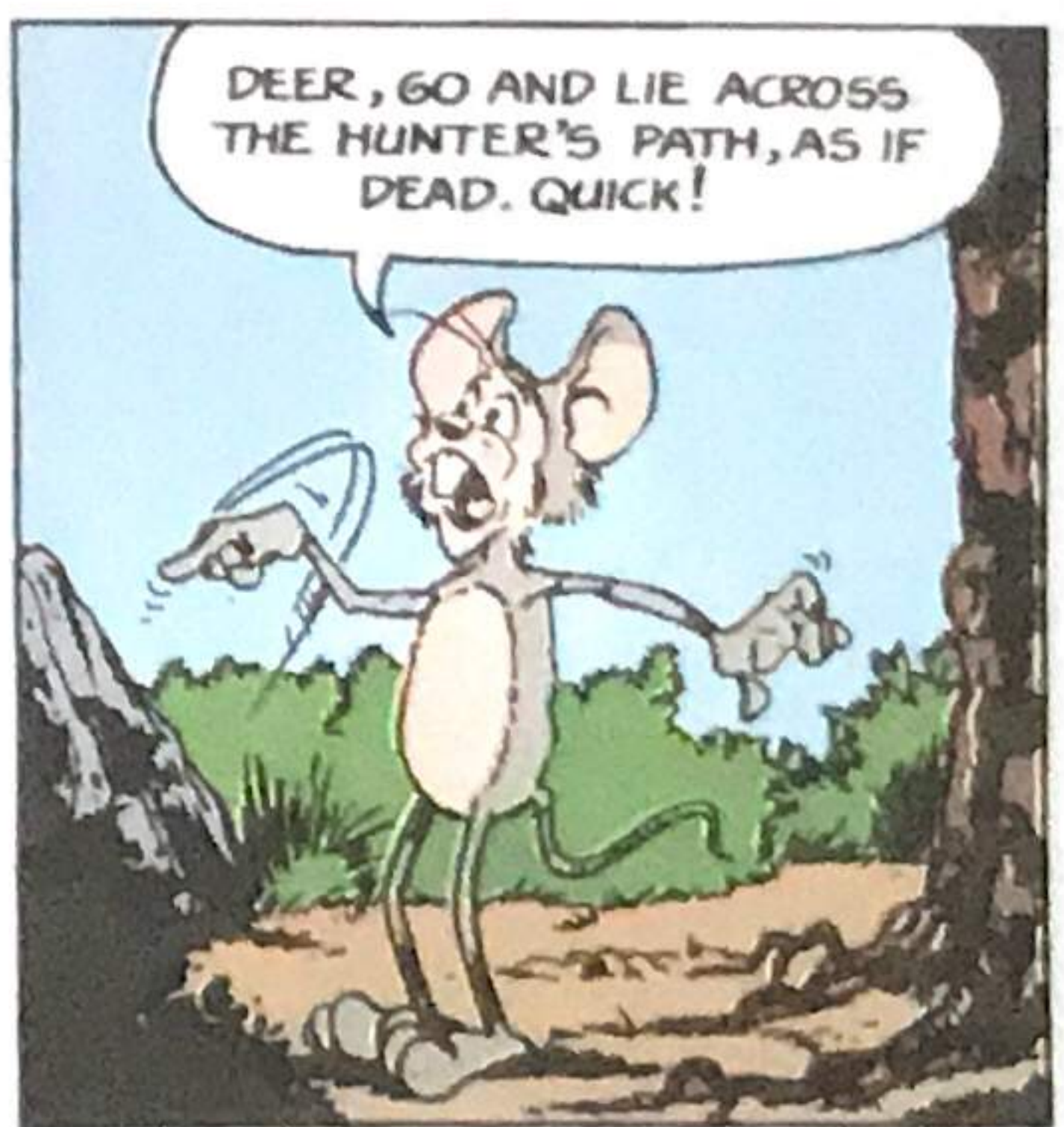
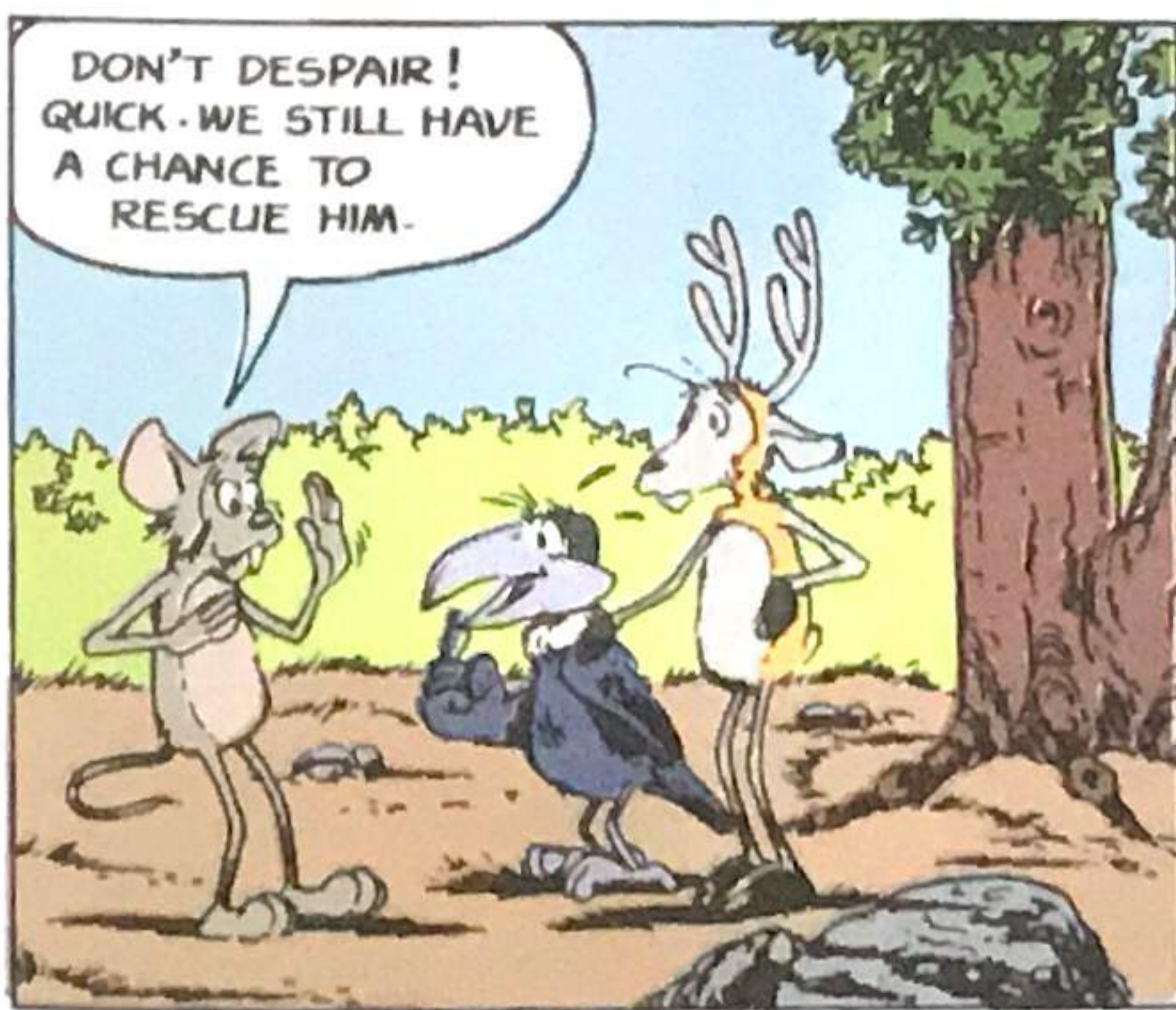
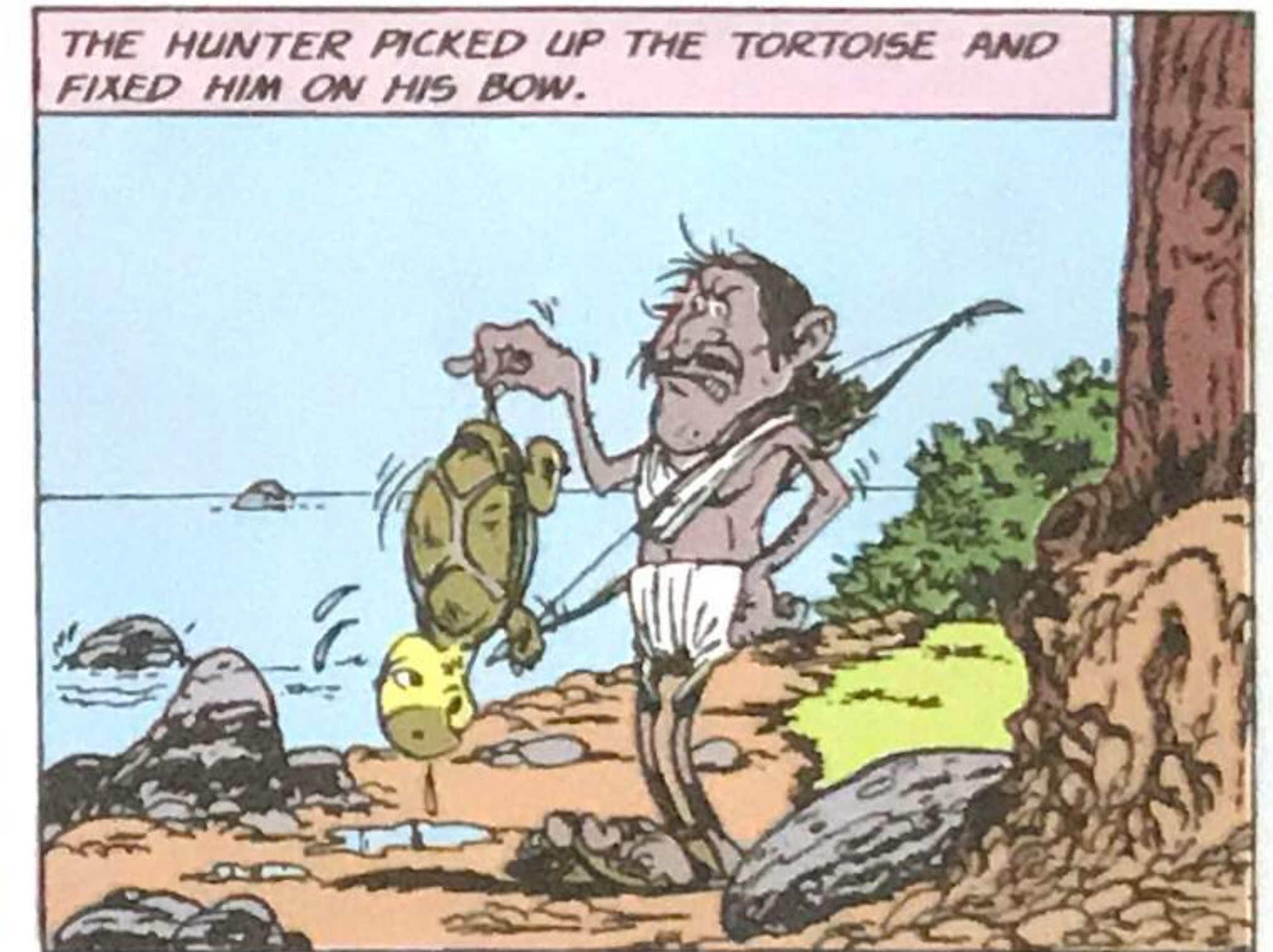
WHEN THE TORTOISE SAW THE CROW, HE WAS OVERJOYED.

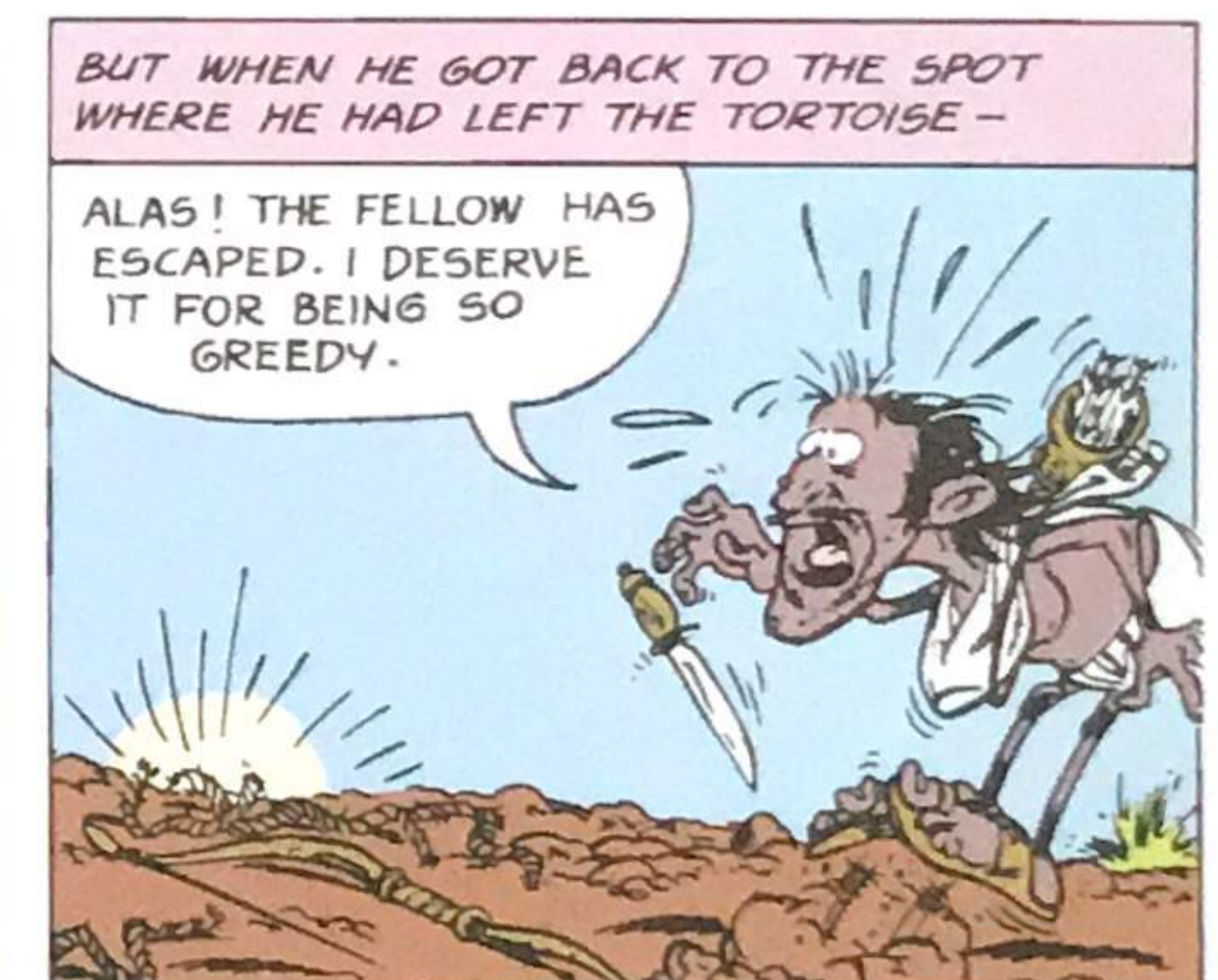
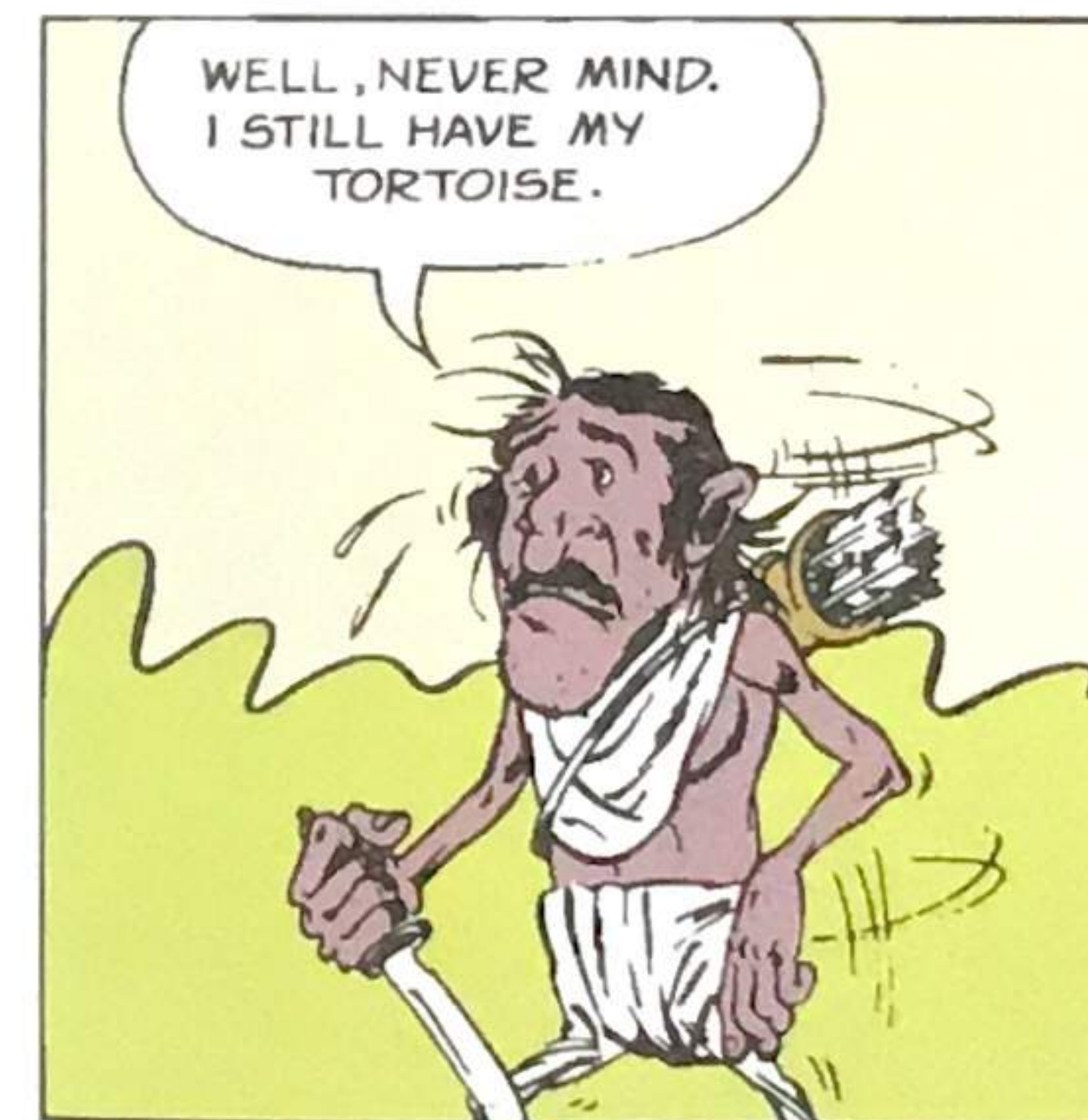
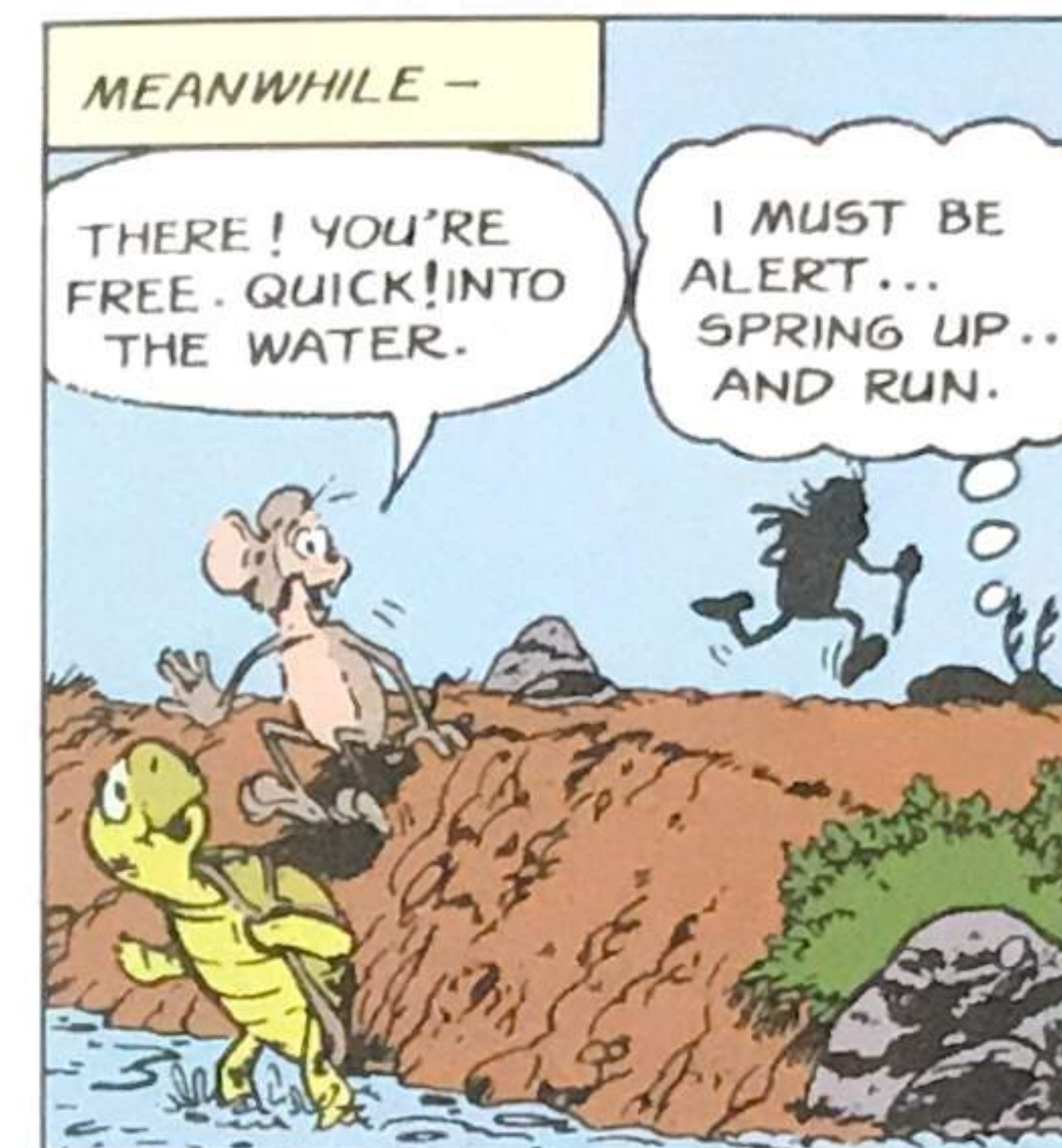
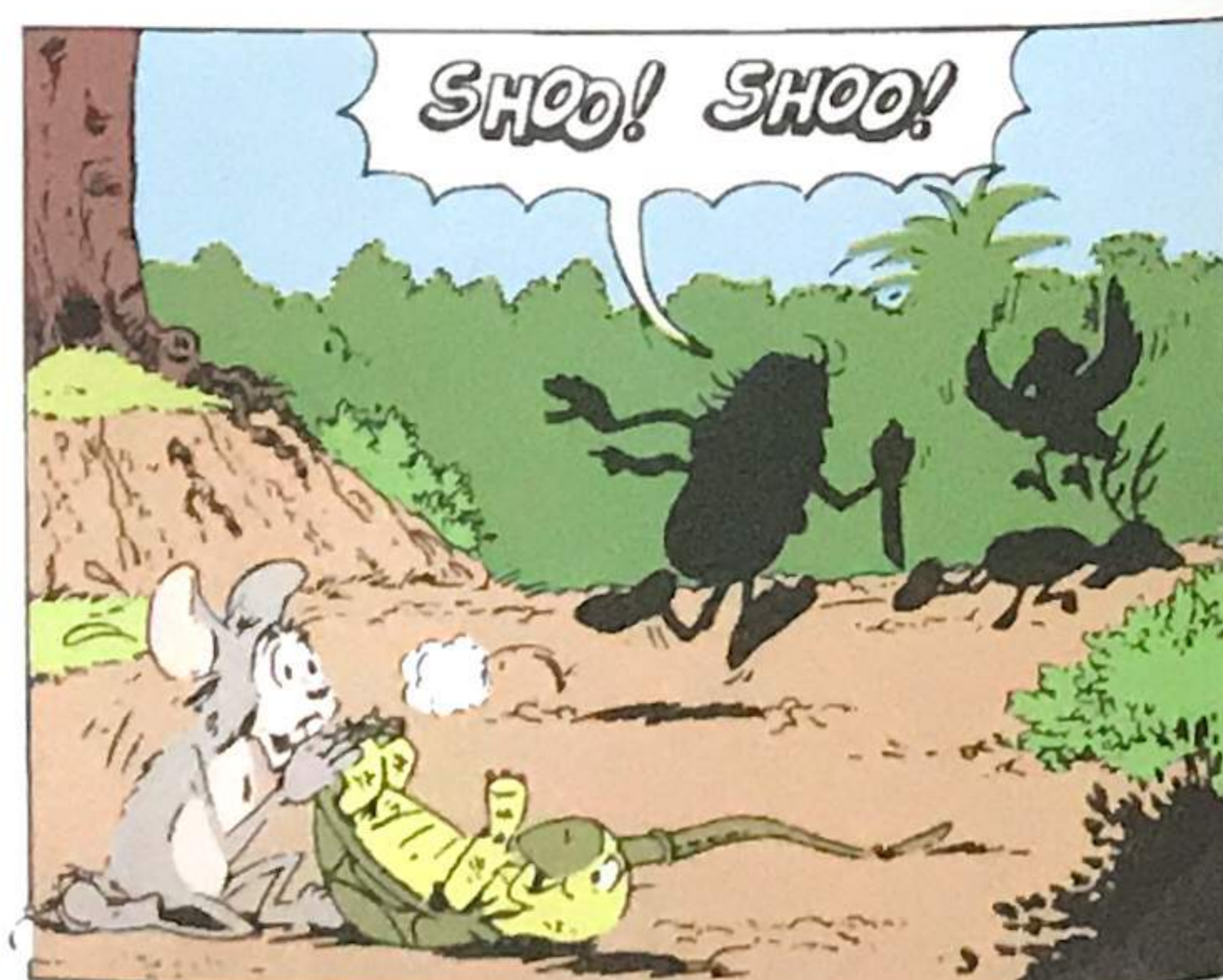
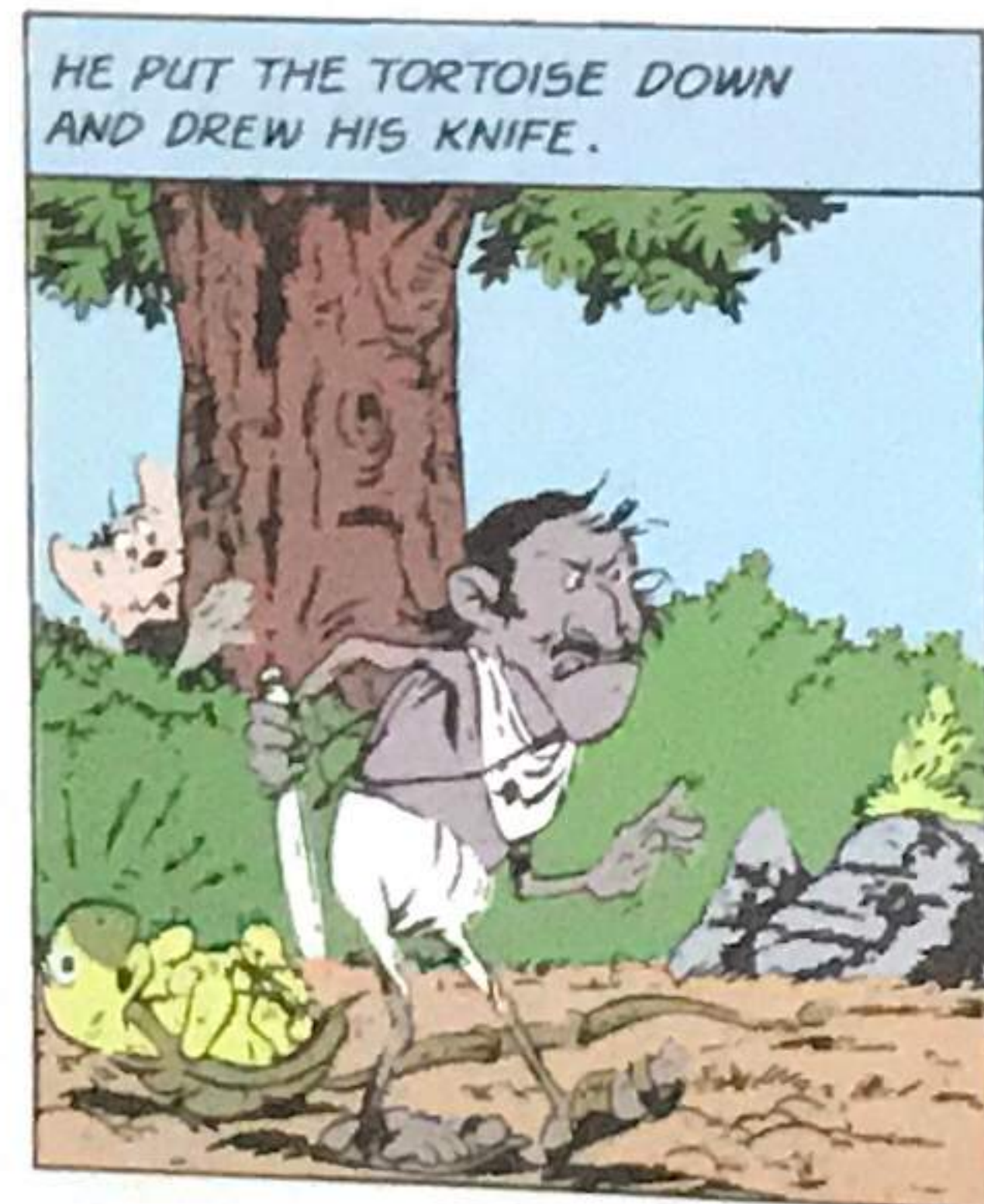
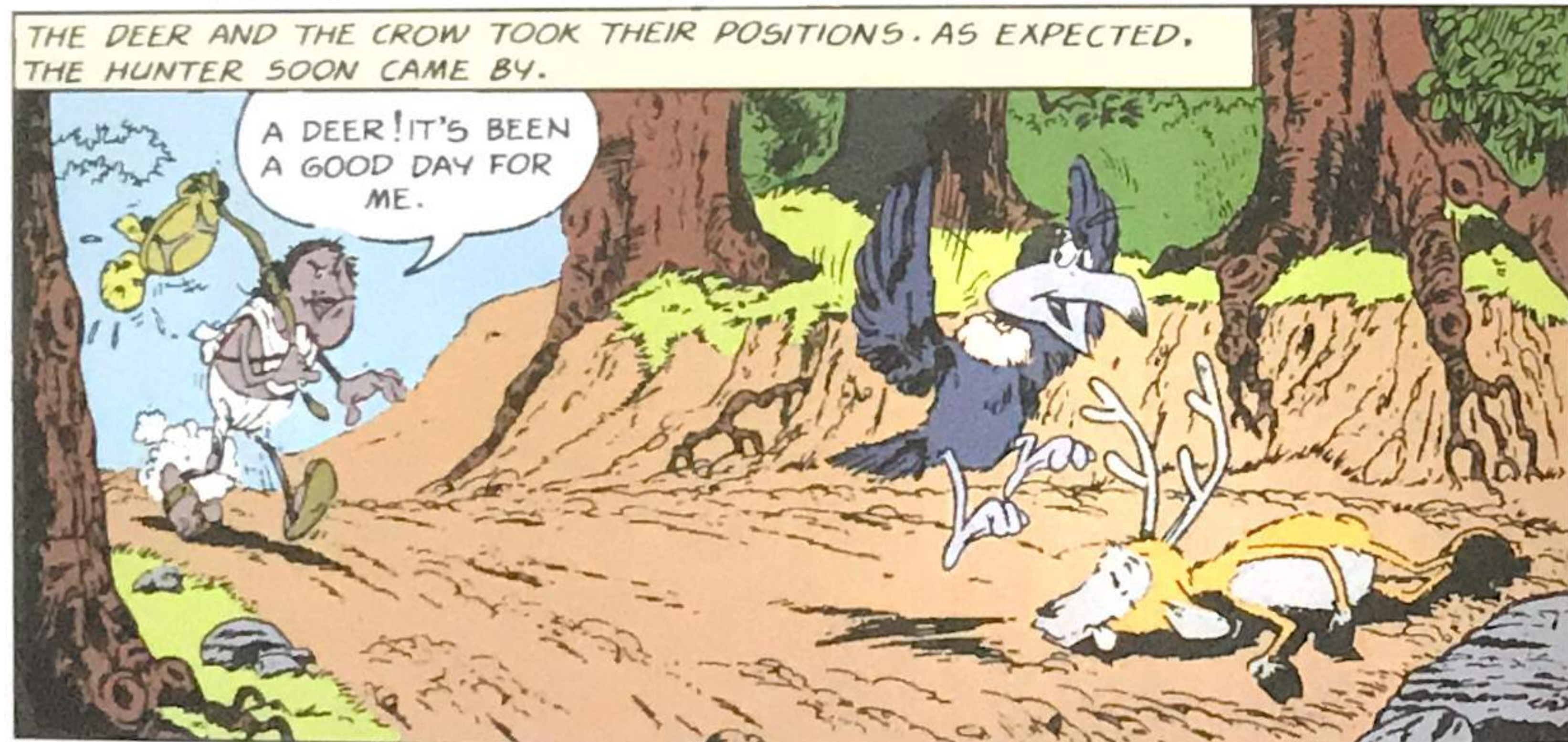
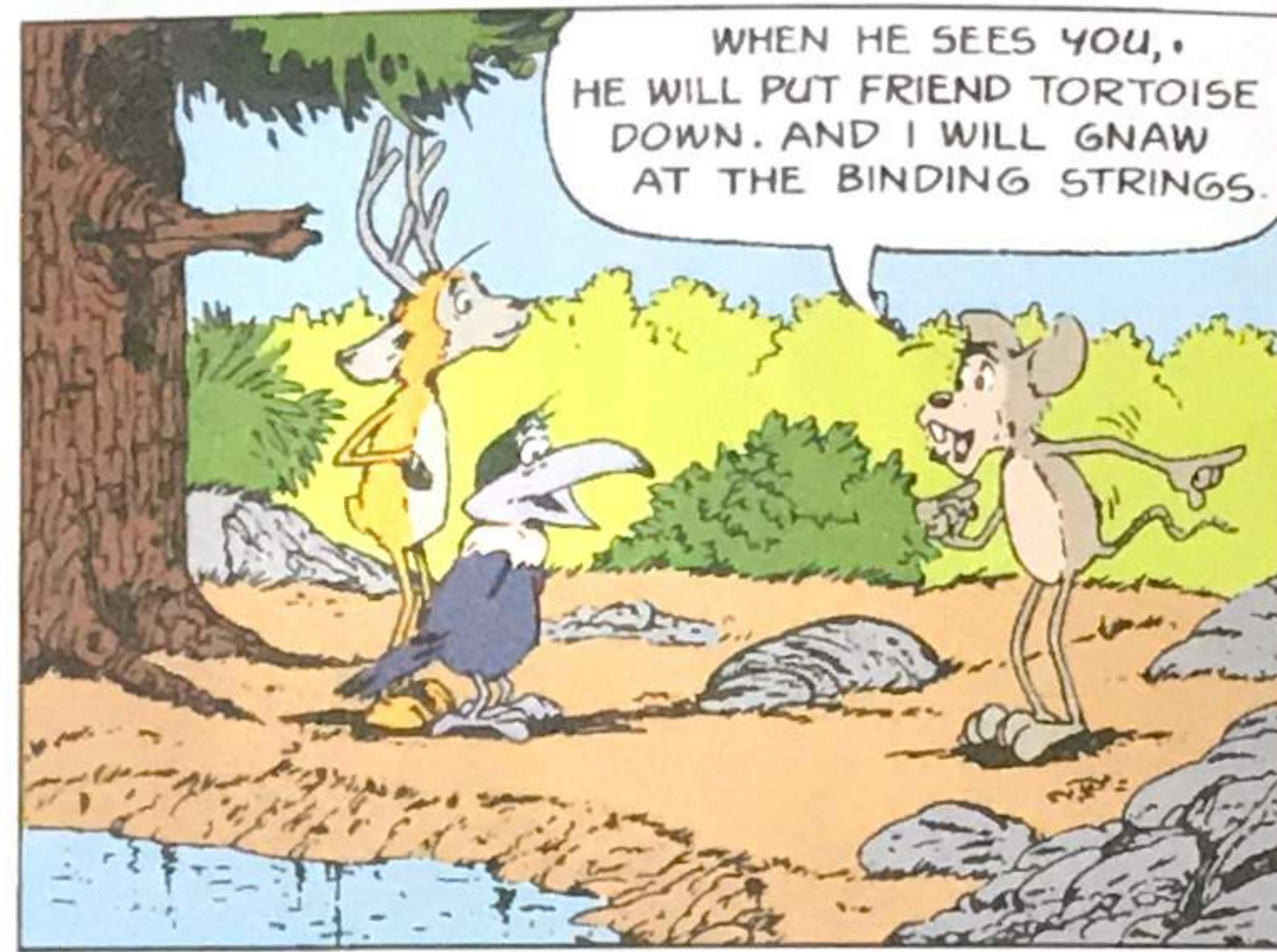
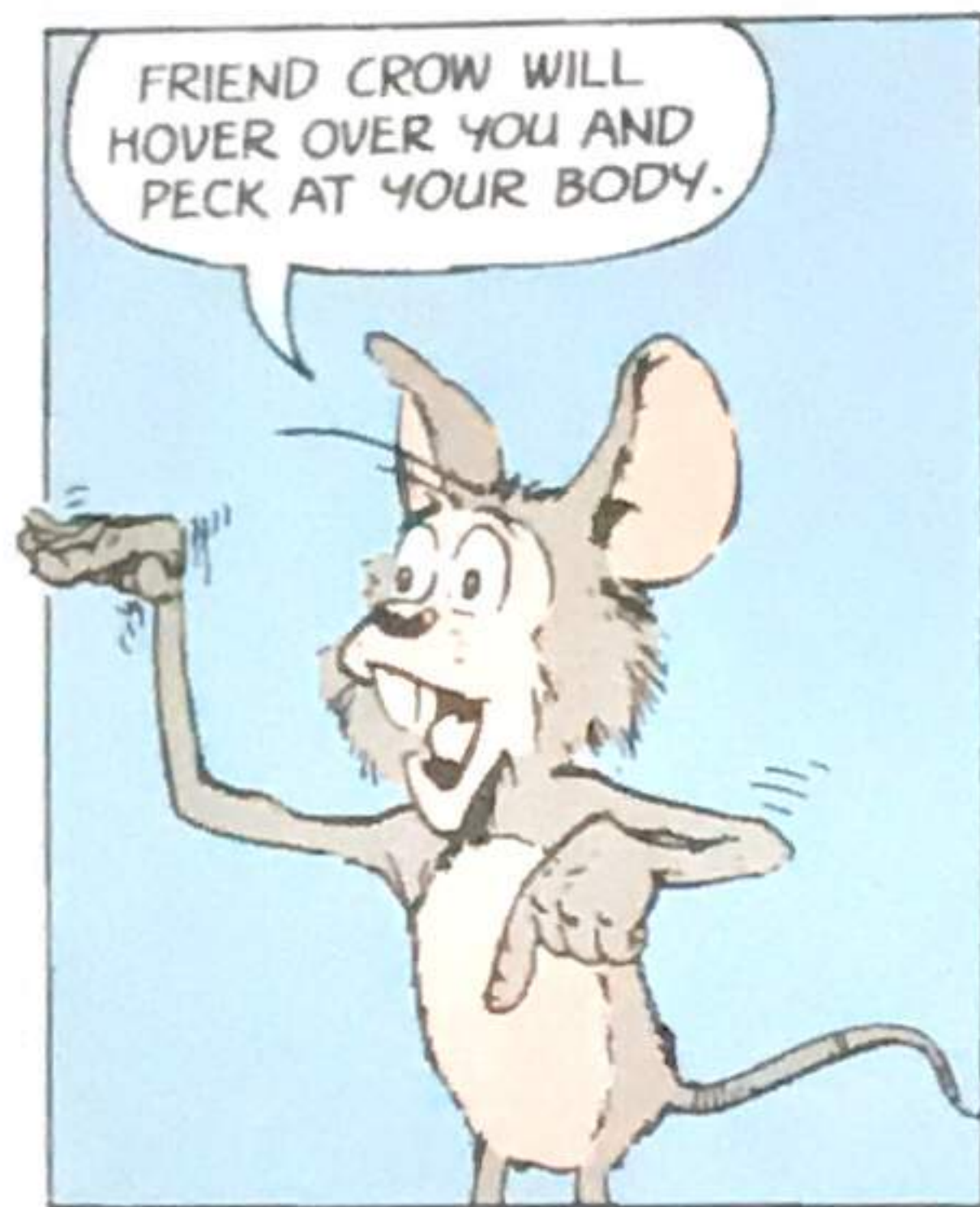


THE DEER HAD HIS REPAST AS THEY WAITED FOR THE TORTOISE.



BUT HOW WILL GOOD OLD TORTOISE MAKE IT ACROSS THE LAND?





THE TIGER AND THE TRAVELLER

ONE DAY A TIGER, TOO OLD TO HUNT, WAS WALKING BY A MARSHY POOL WHEN HE SAW A GOLD BANGLE.

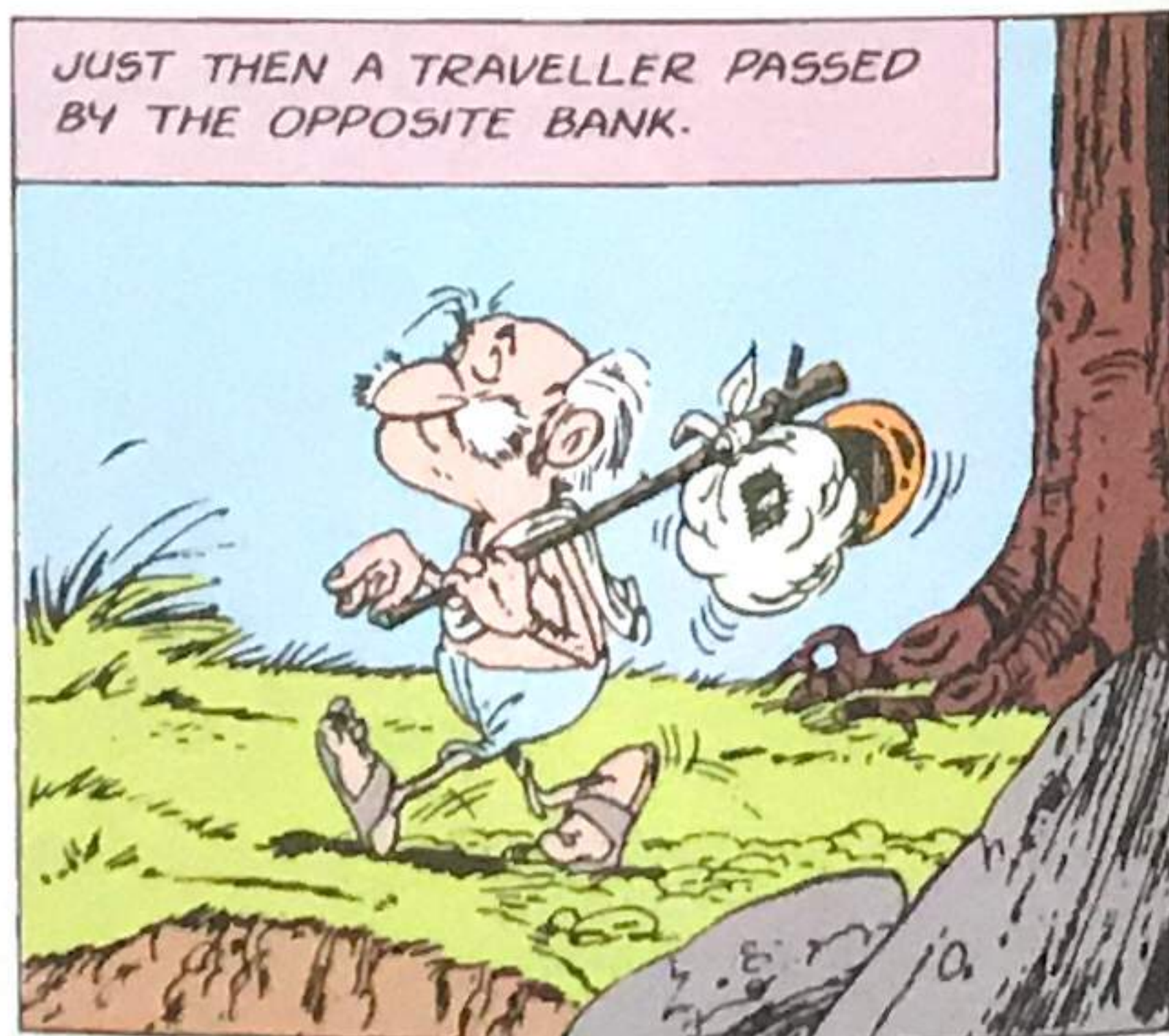
I MAY AS WELL PICK IT UP. IT COULD BE OF SOME USE.



I'VE GOT THE BAIT. NOW I MUST WAIT FOR THE CATCH.

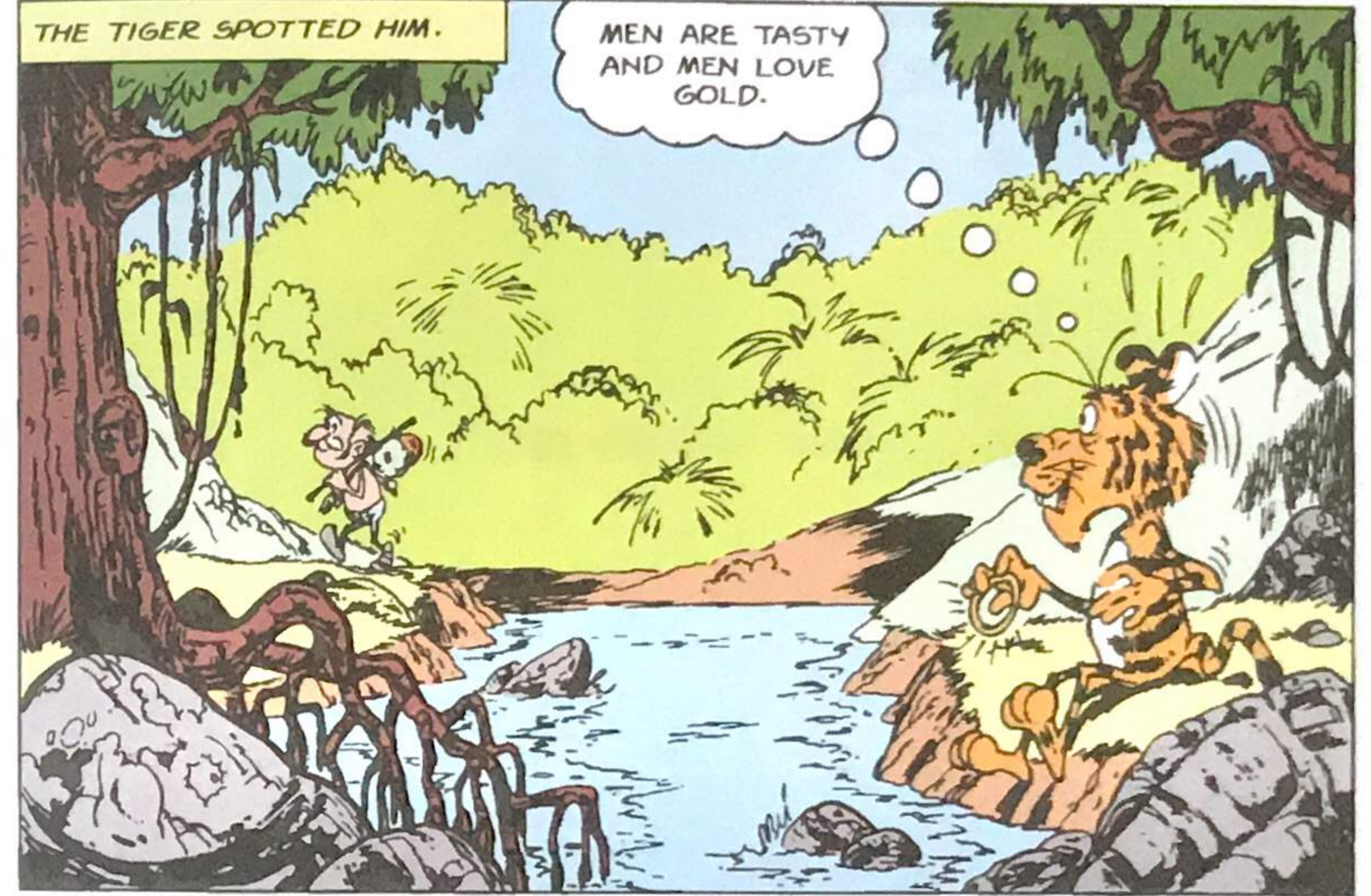


JUST THEN A TRAVELLER PASSED BY THE OPPOSITE BANK.

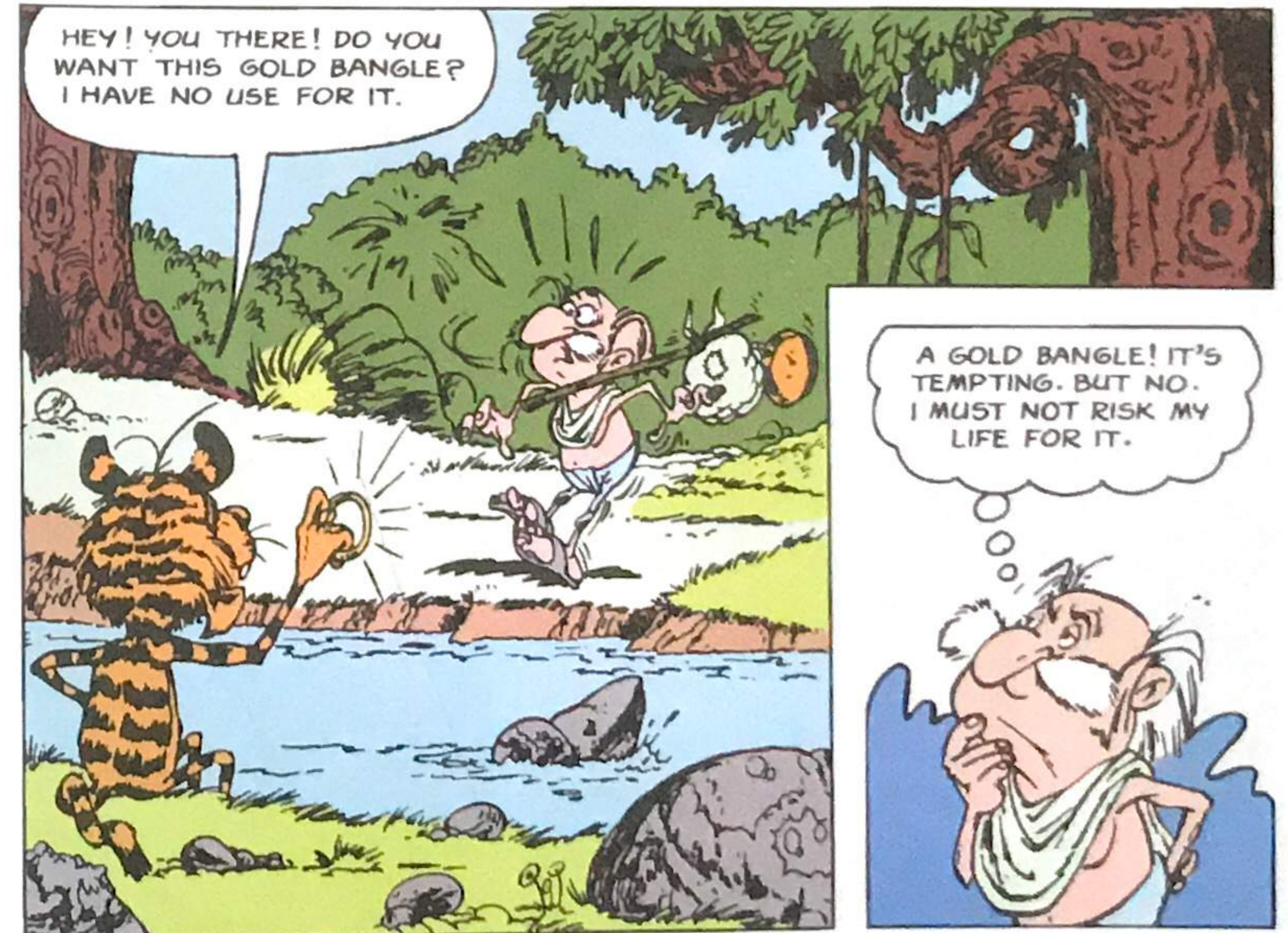


THE TIGER SPOTTED HIM.

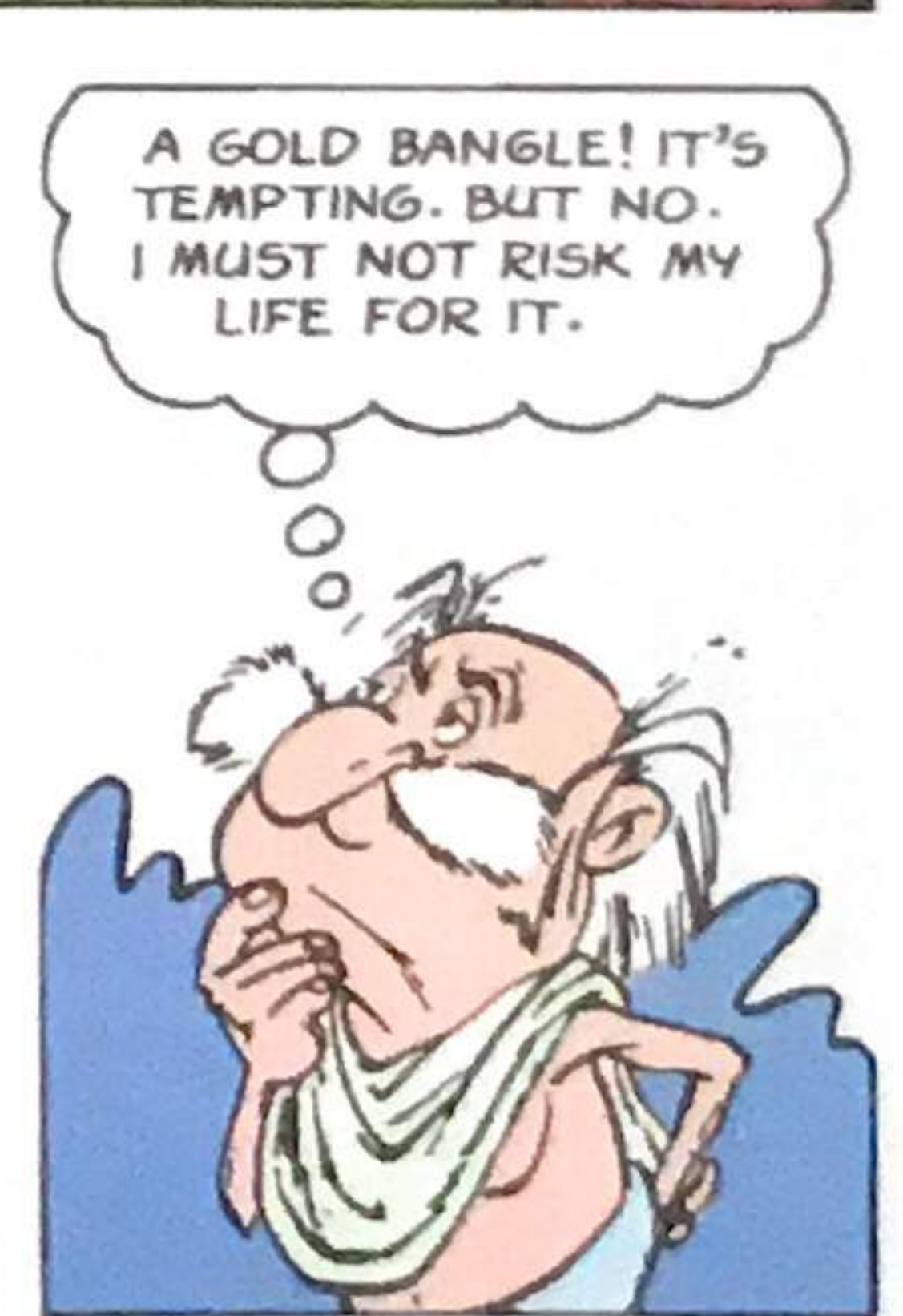
MEN ARE TASTY AND MEN LOVE GOLD.

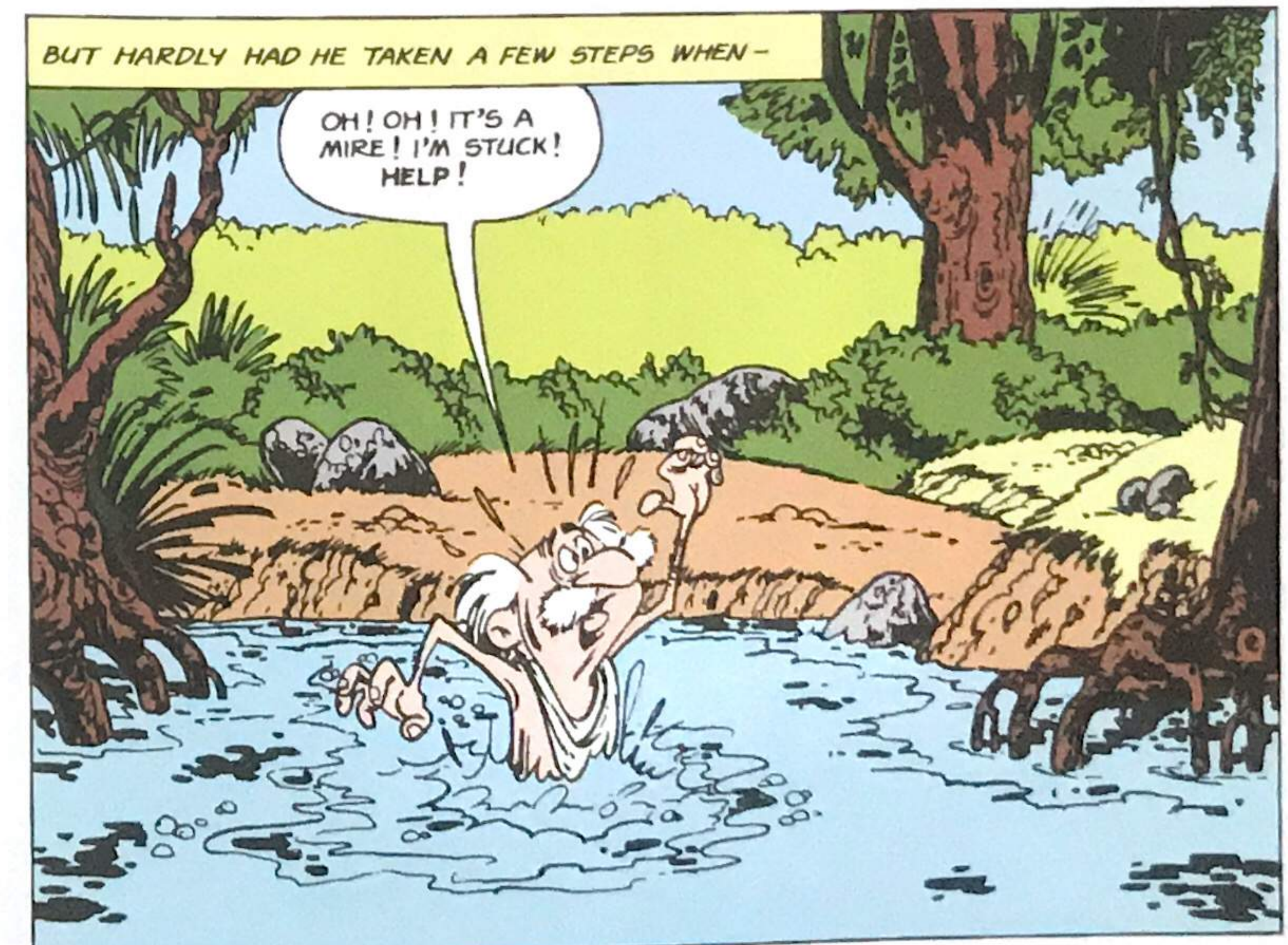
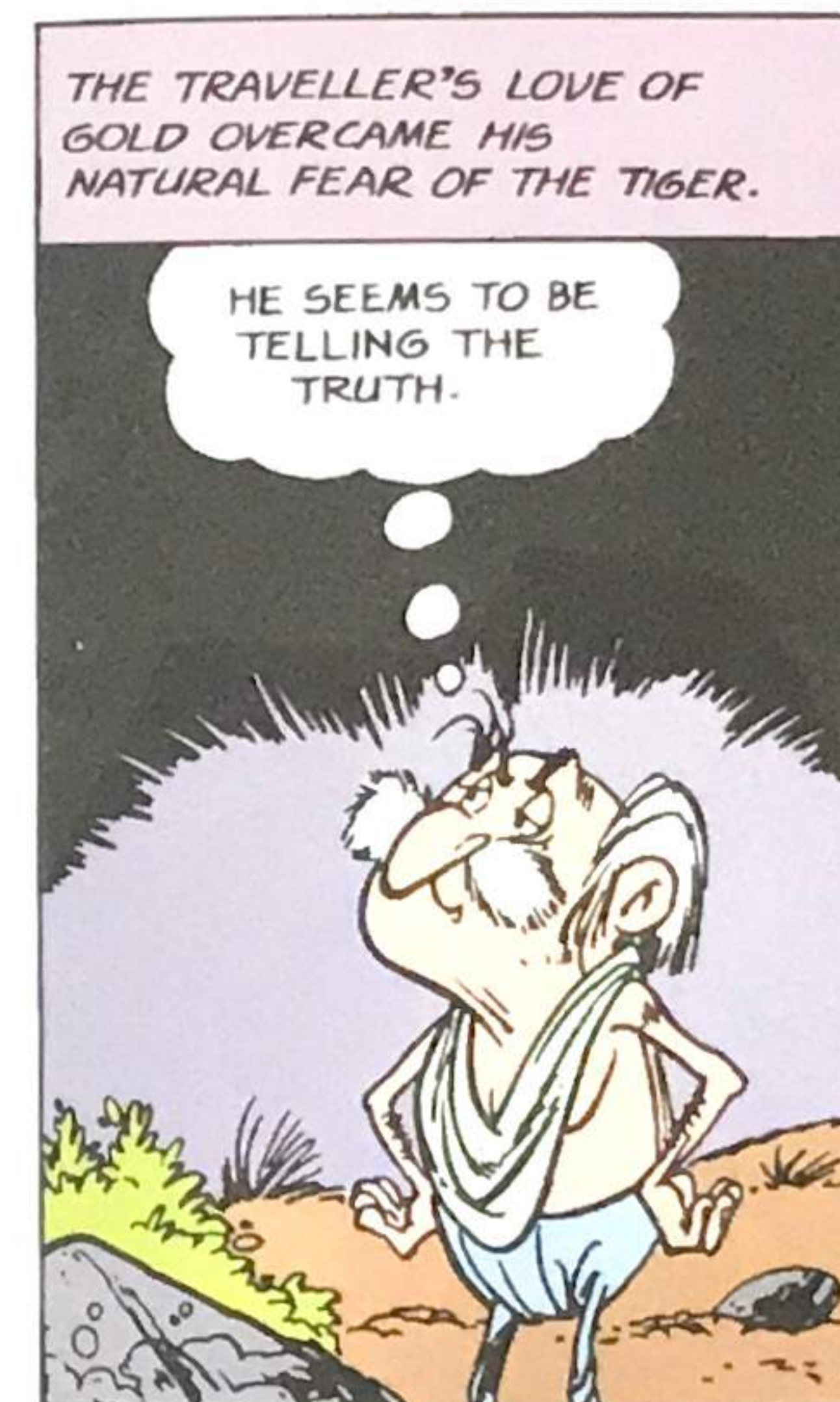
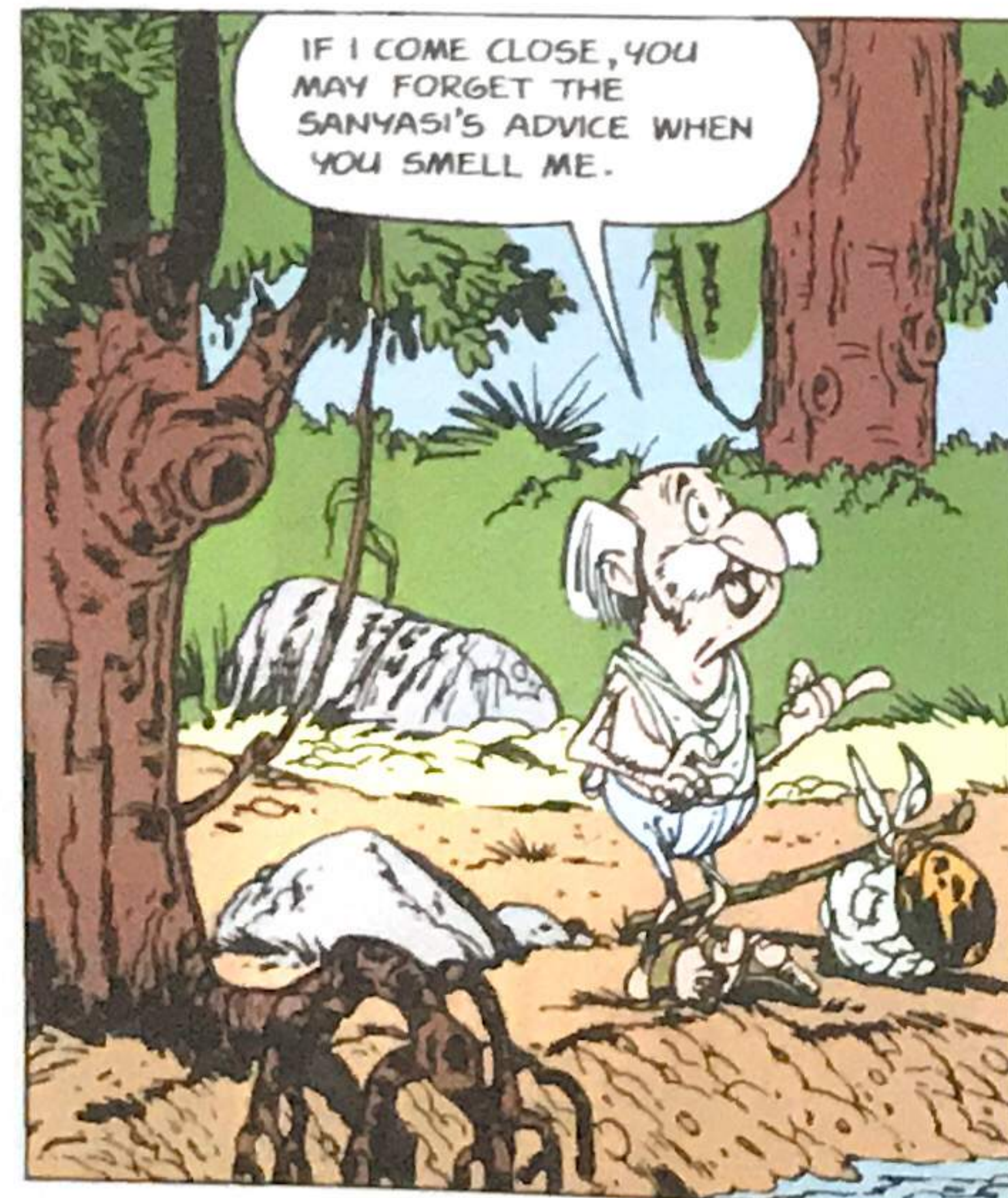
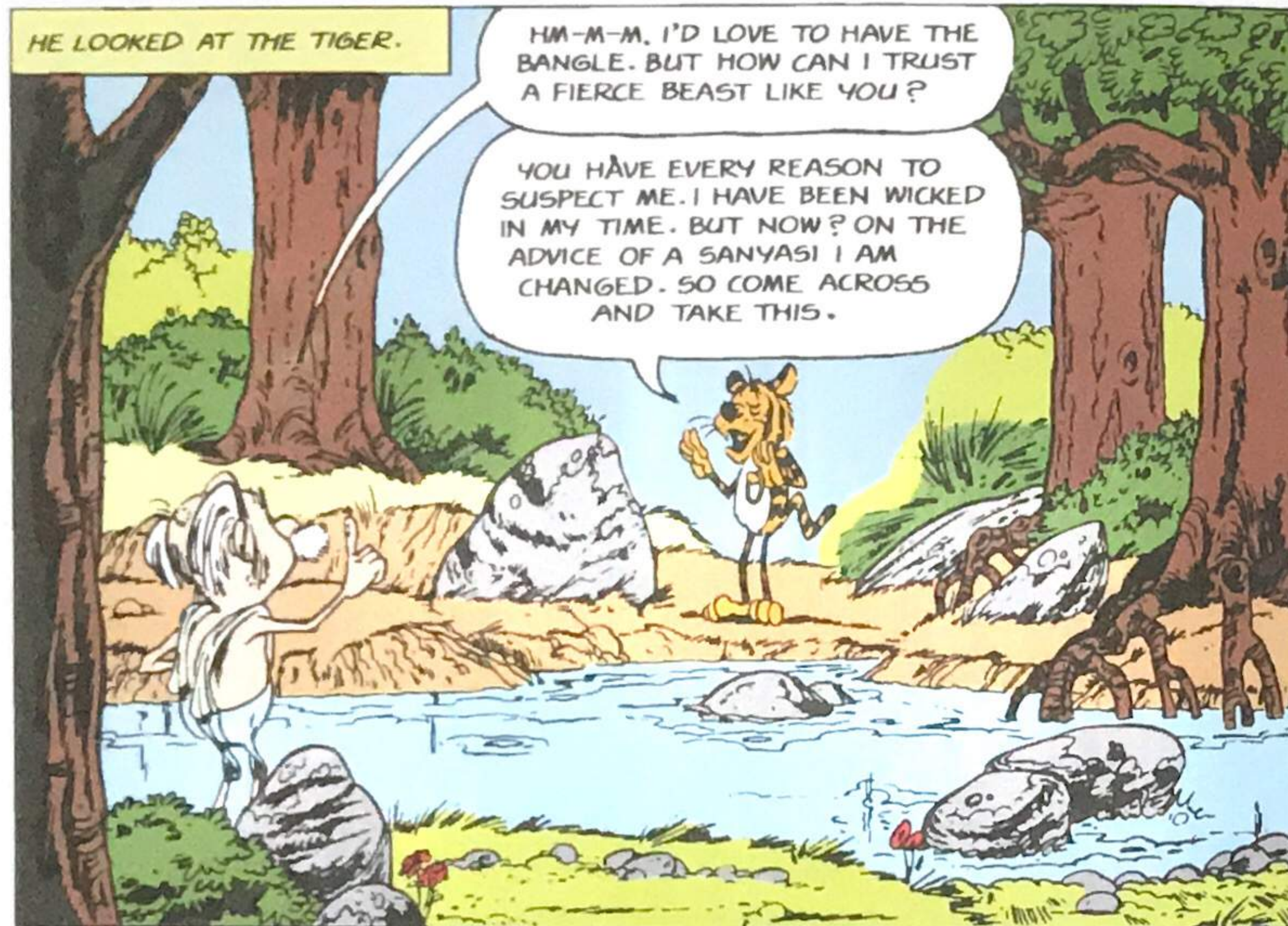


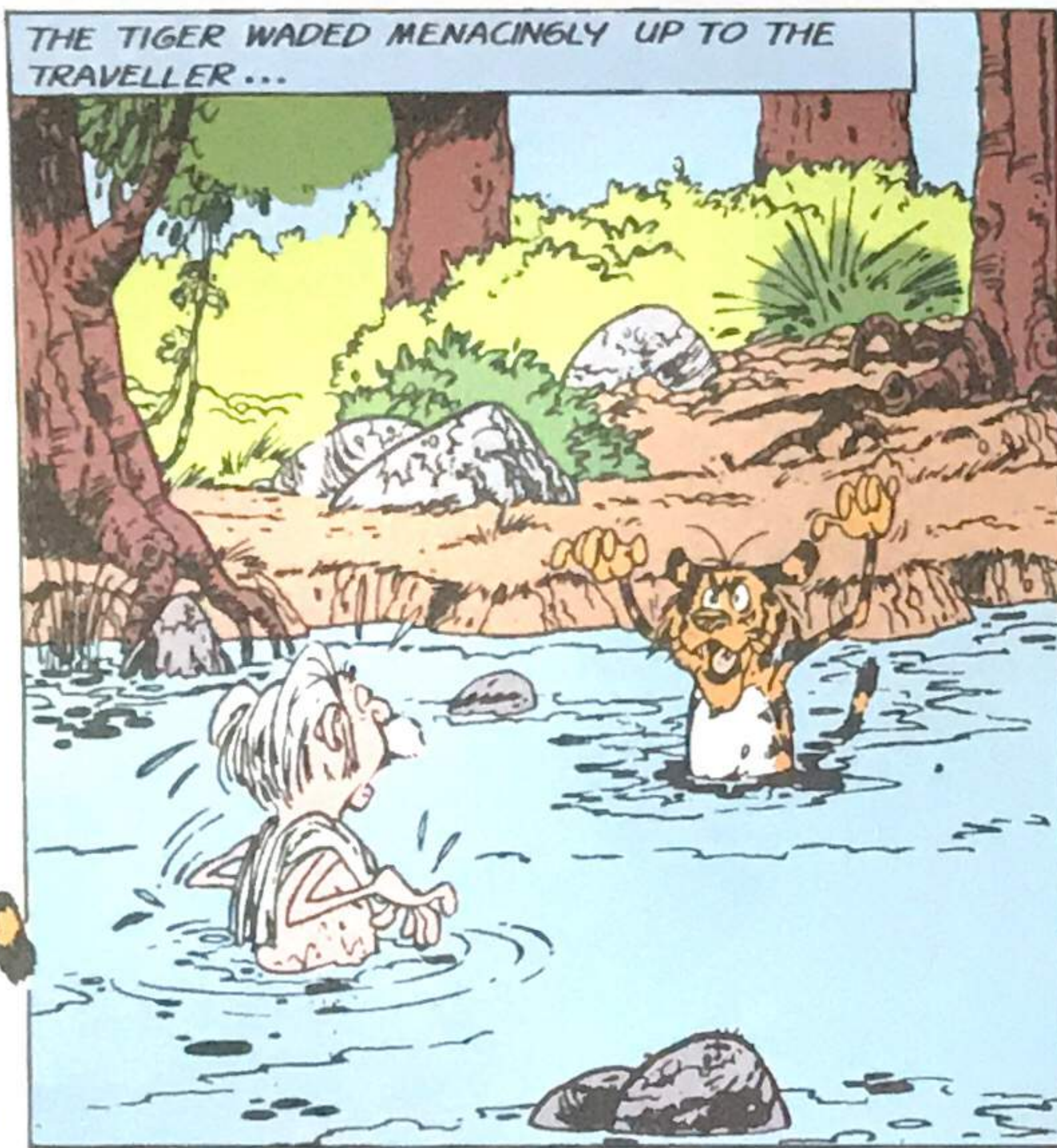
HEY! YOU THERE! DO YOU WANT THIS GOLD BANGLE? I HAVE NO USE FOR IT.



A GOLD BANGLE! IT'S TEMPTING. BUT NO. I MUST NOT RISK MY LIFE FOR IT.

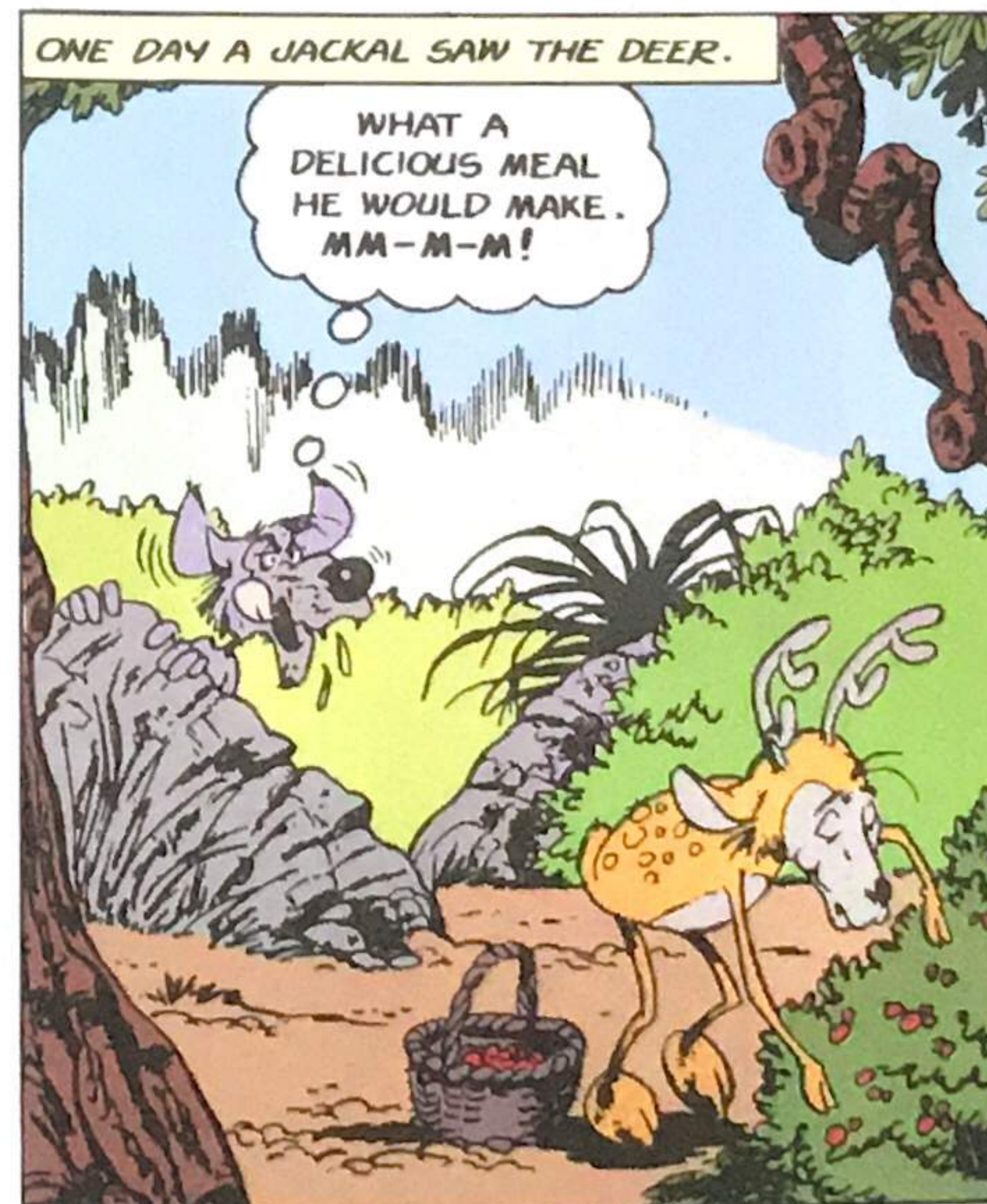
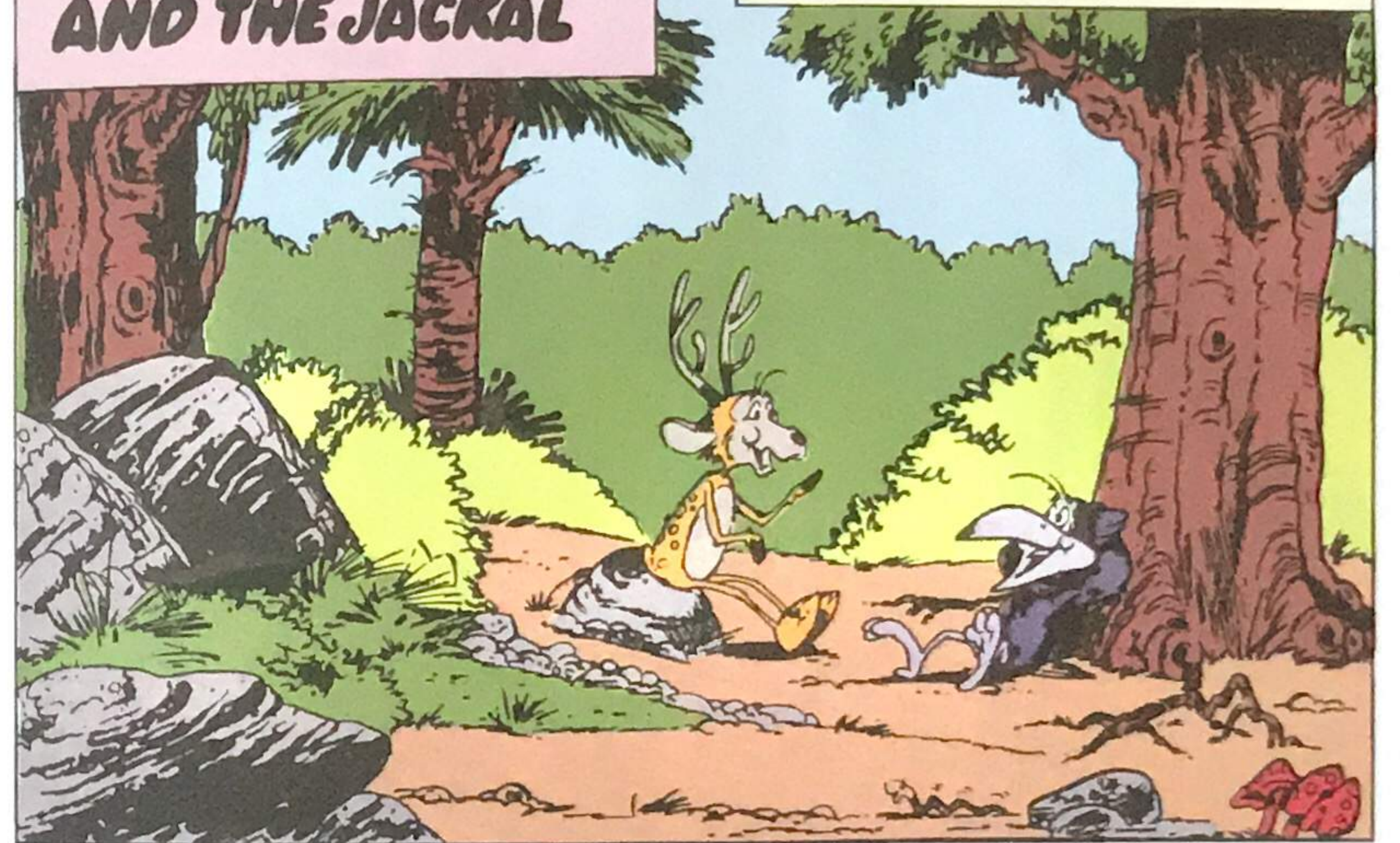


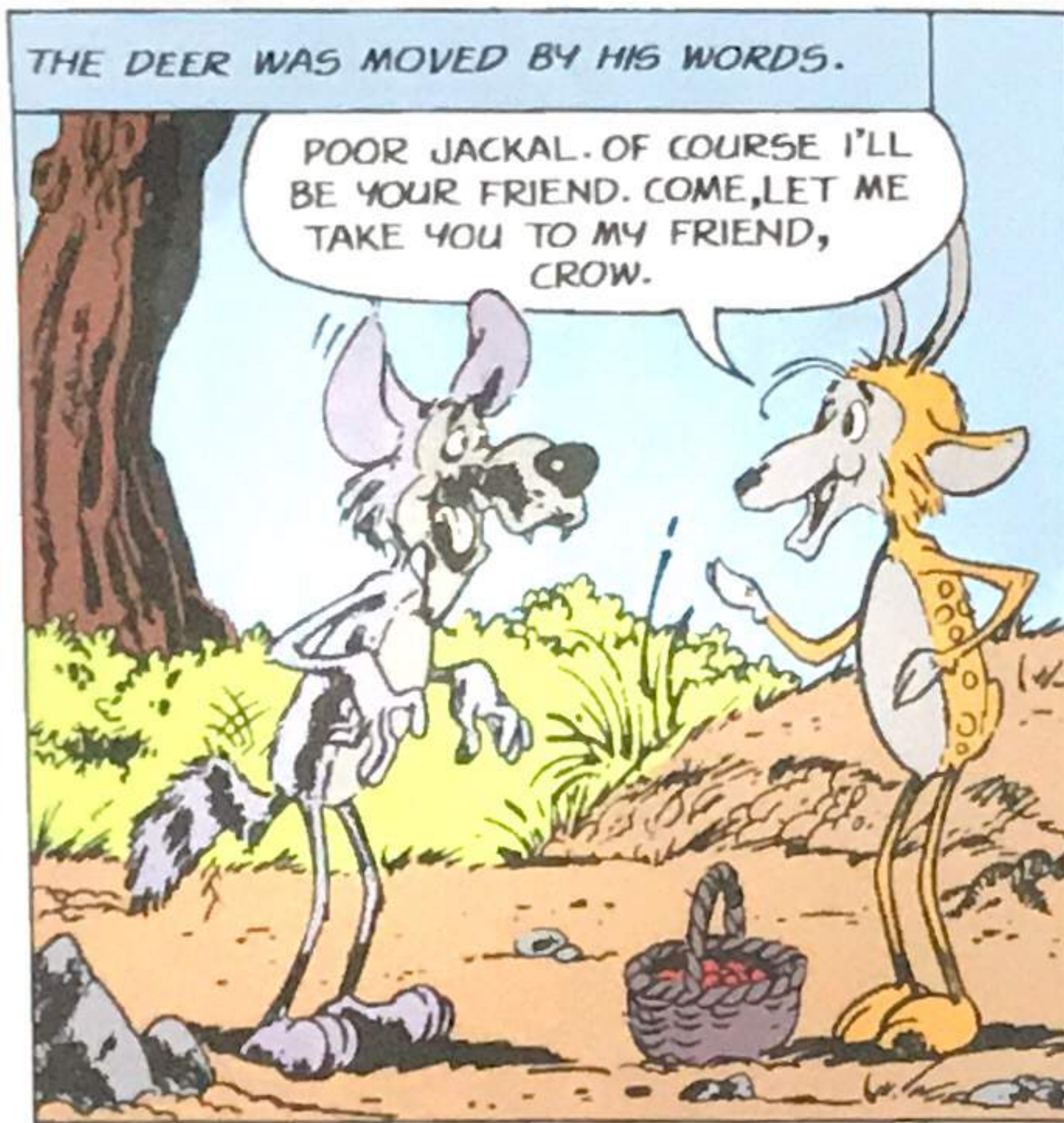




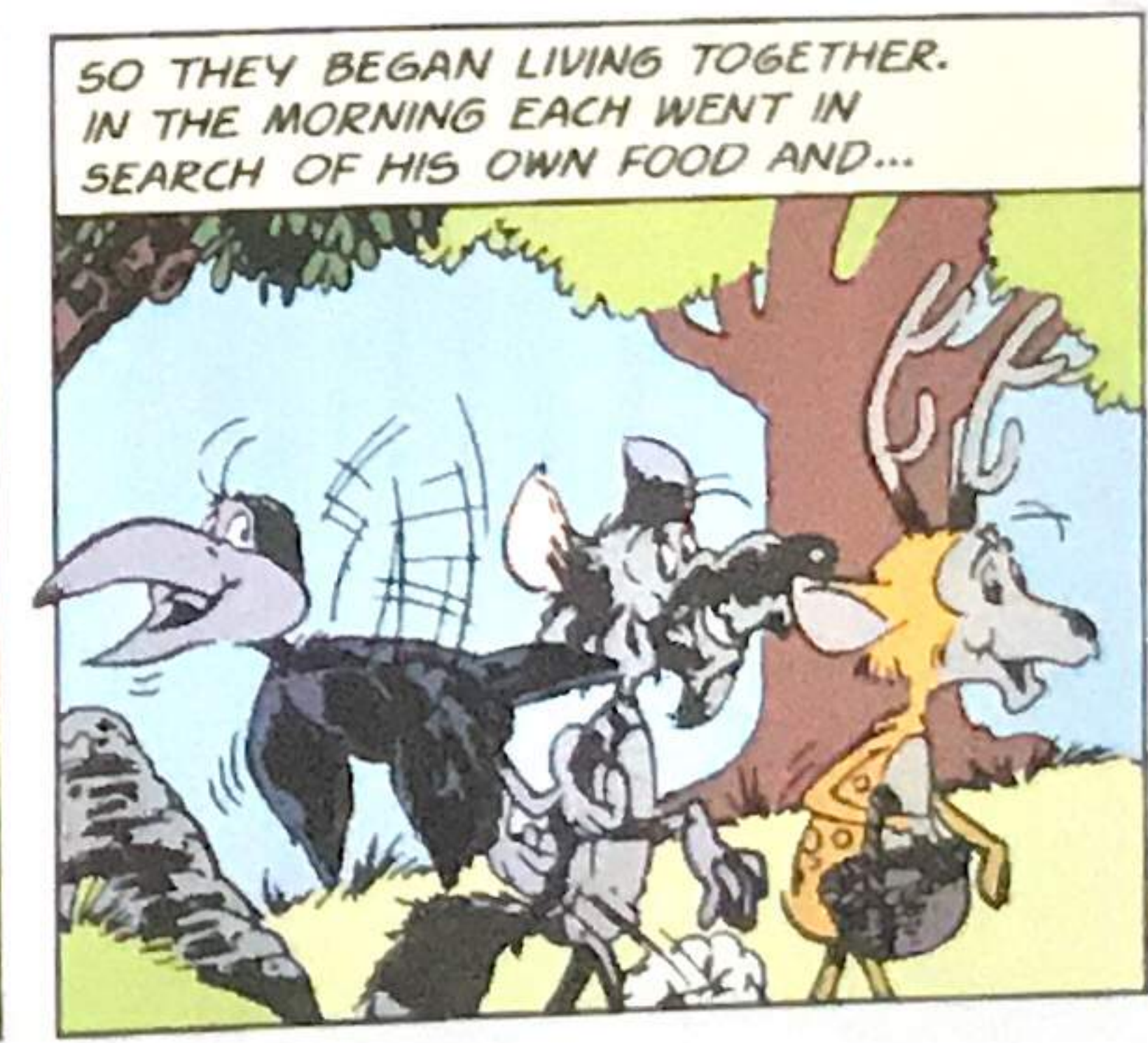
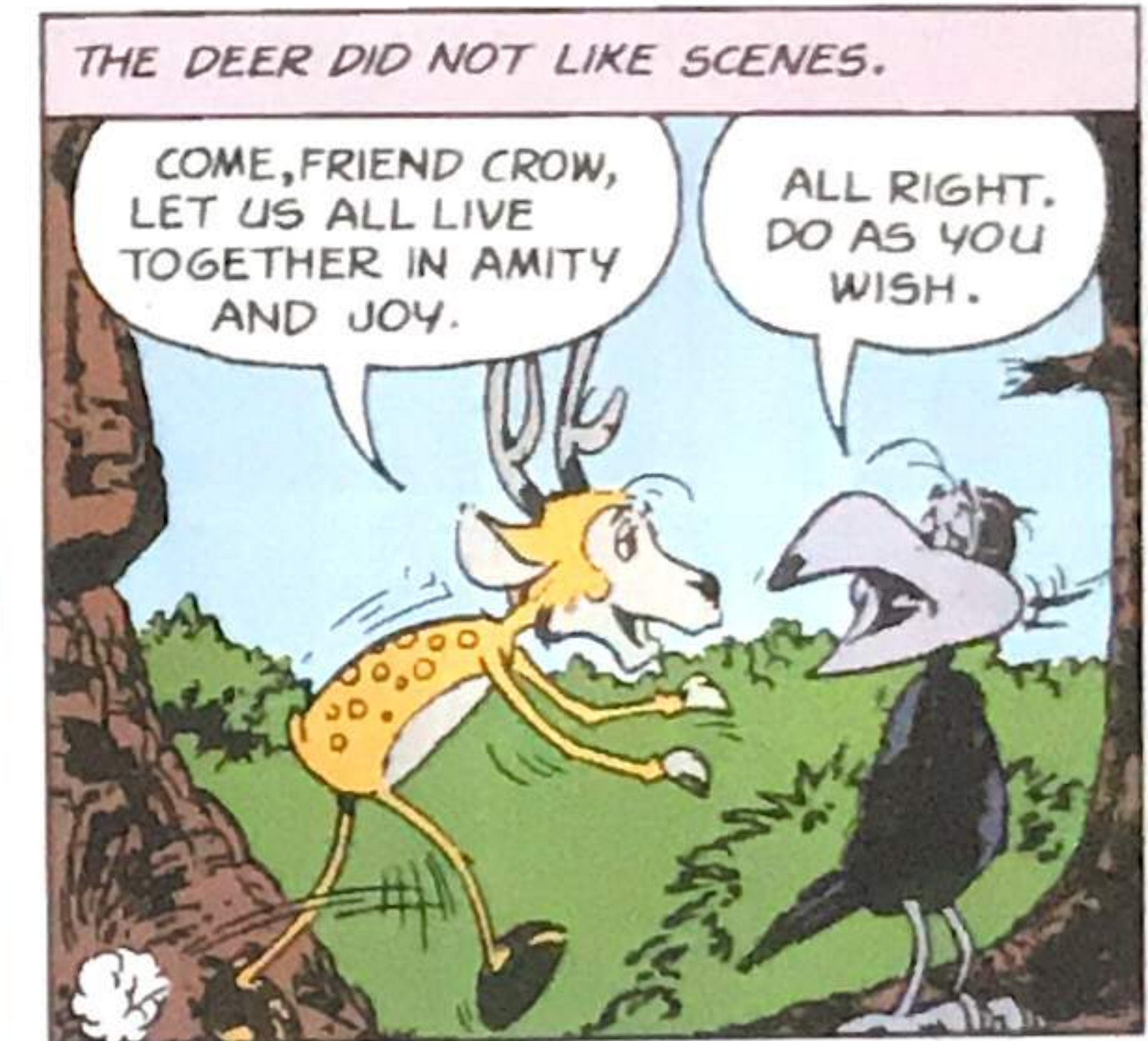
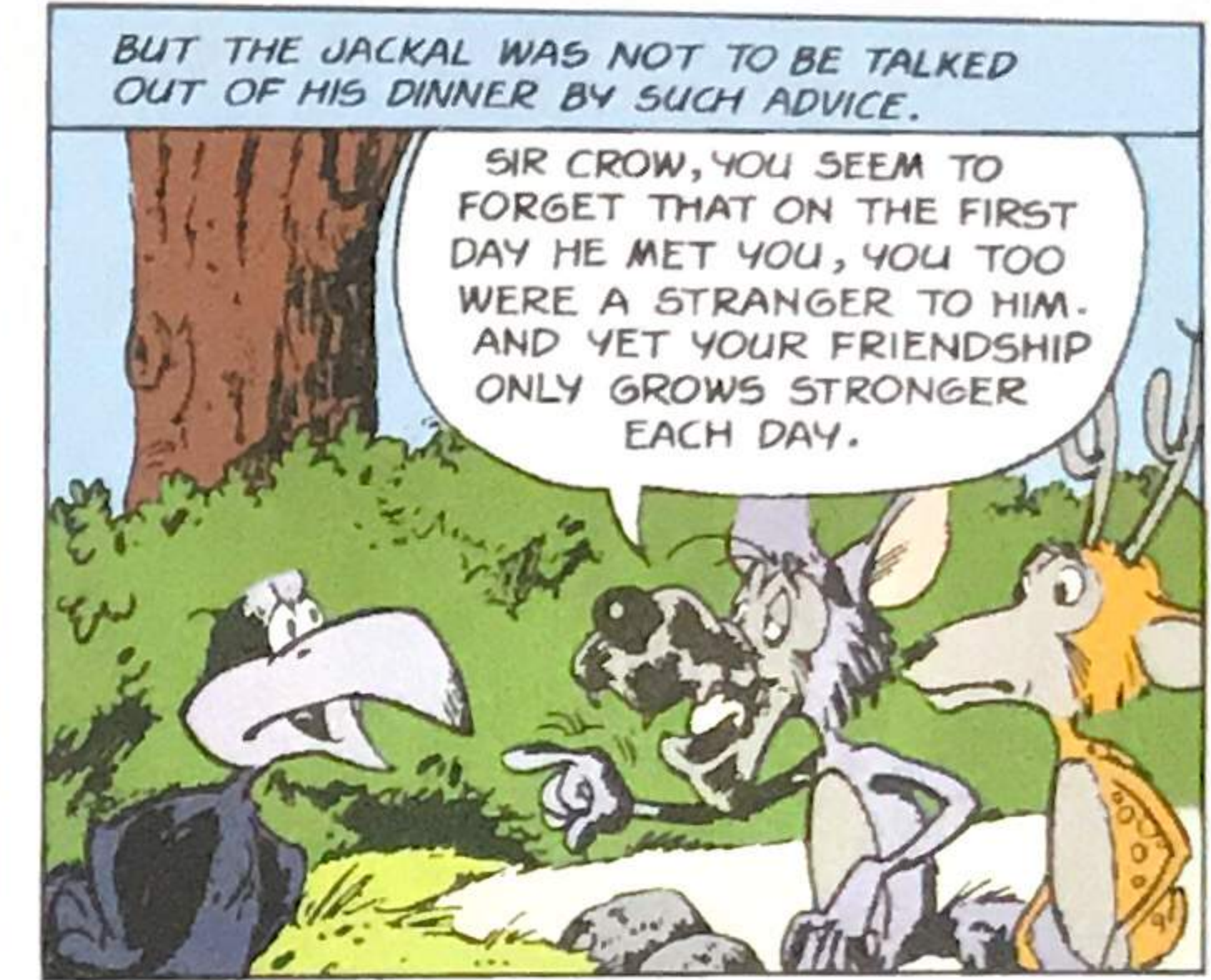
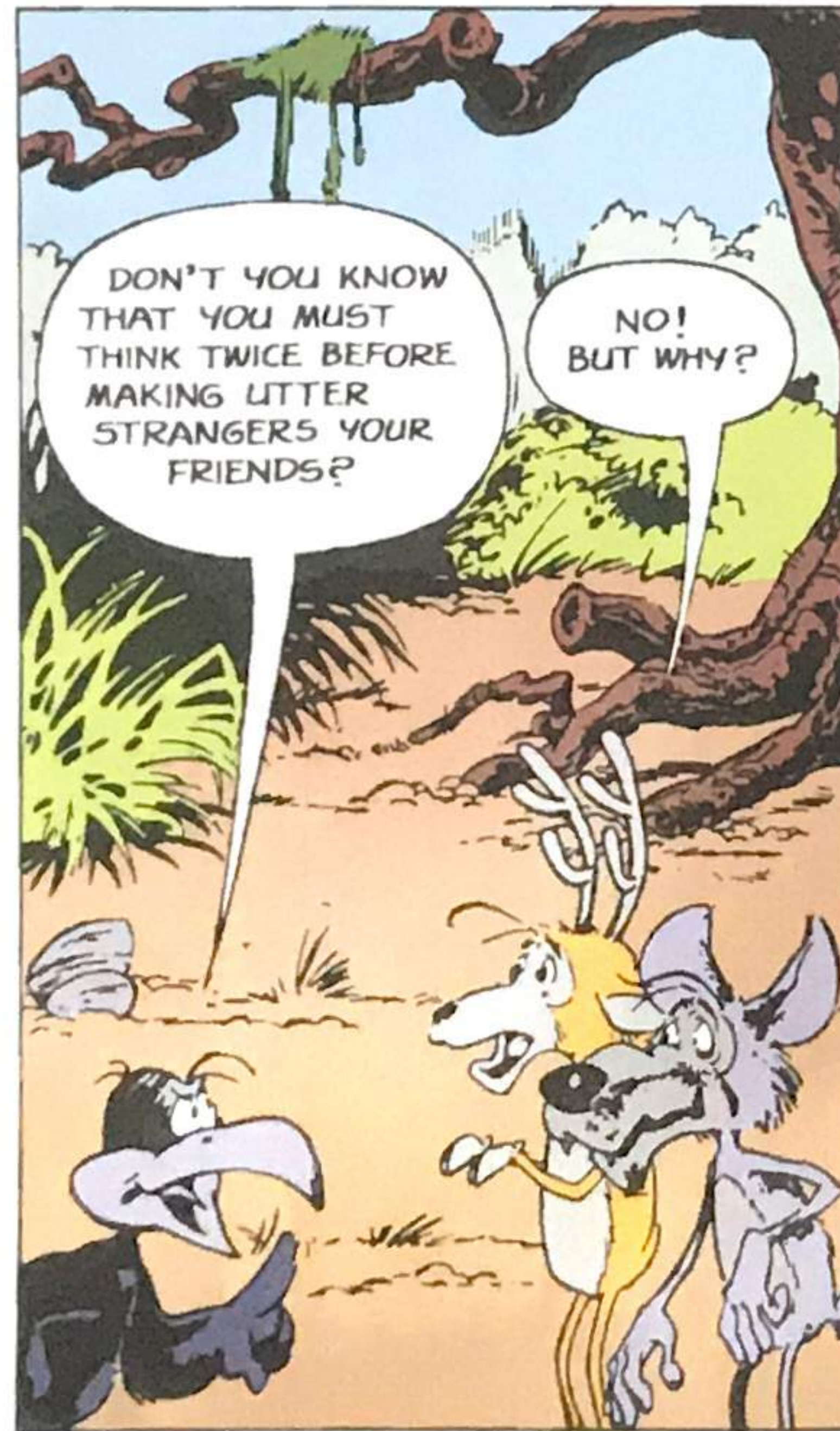
THE CROW, THE DEER AND THE JACKAL

LONG, LONG AGO THERE LIVED A DEER AND A CROW. THEY WERE GOOD FRIENDS AND LOVED EACH OTHER DEARLY.

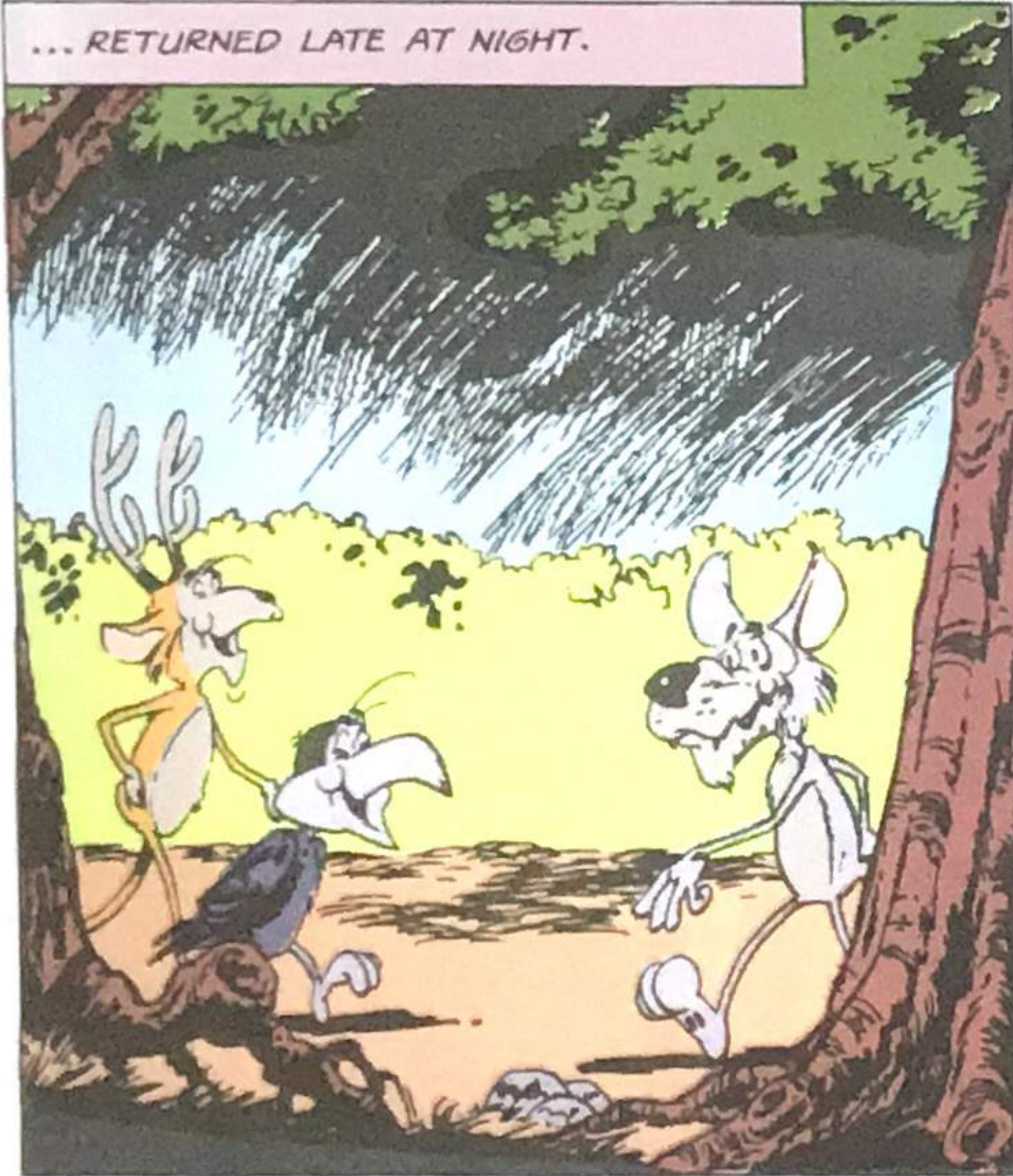




WHEN THE CROW SAW THE TWO TOGETHER, HE WAS SURPRISED.



... RETURNED LATE AT NIGHT.



ONE MORNING A FEW DAYS LATER, WHEN THE CROW HAD LEFT -

FRIEND DEER, IN ONE CORNER OF THIS FOREST THERE IS A FIELD FULL OF SWEET GRAIN. LET ME SHOW IT TO YOU. COME.



THE INNOCENT DEER ACCOMPANIED HIM AND GRAZED IN THE FIELD.

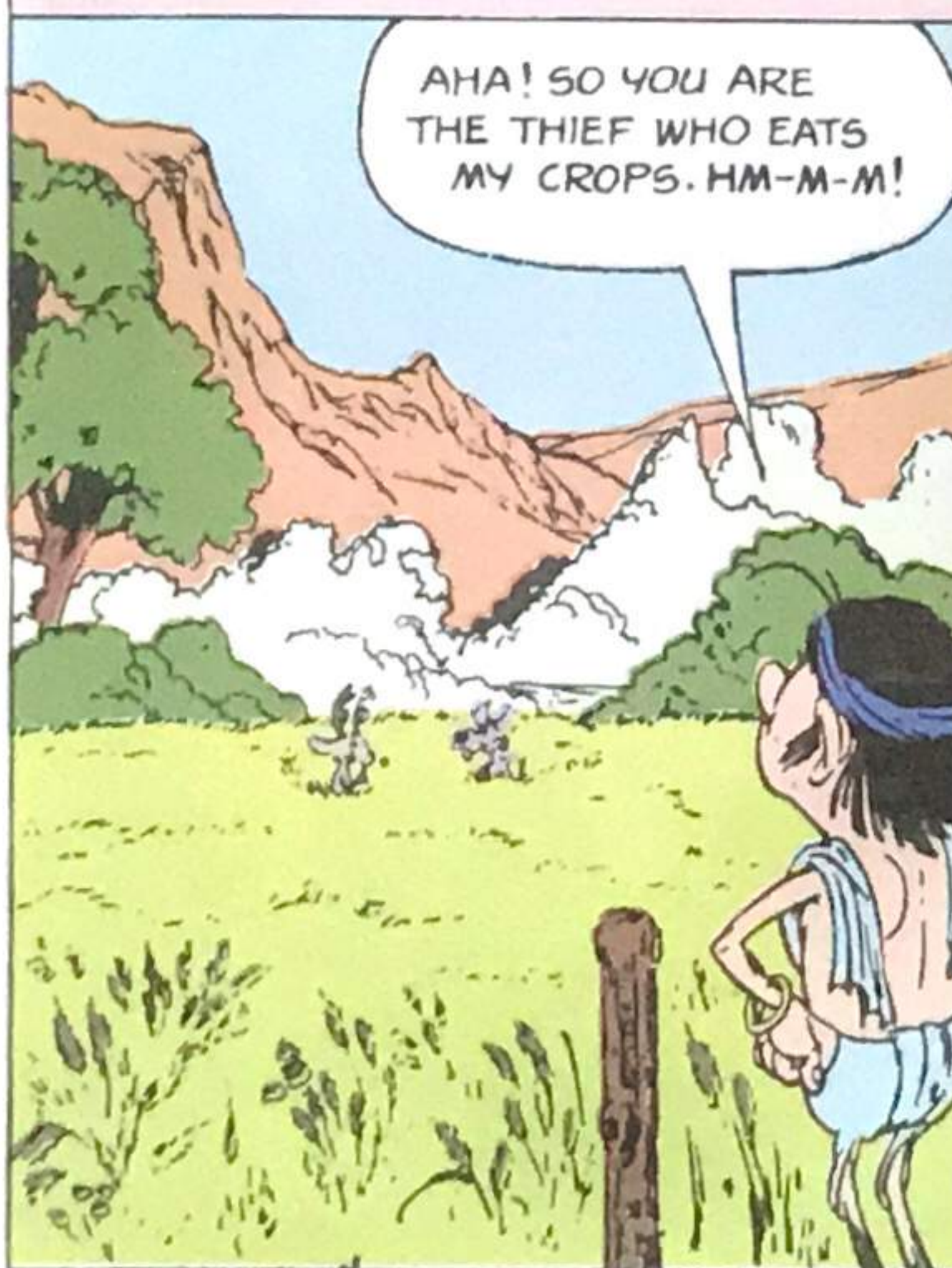
THIS GRAIN IS INDEED VERY SWEET. I SHALL COME HERE EVERY DAY AND FEED ON IT.

HA! HA! AND I WILL SOON FEED ON YOU.



ONE DAY, AS THE JACKAL HAD HOPED, THE OWNER OF THE FIELD SAW THE DEER.

AHA! SO YOU ARE THE THIEF WHO EATS MY CROPS. HM-M-M!



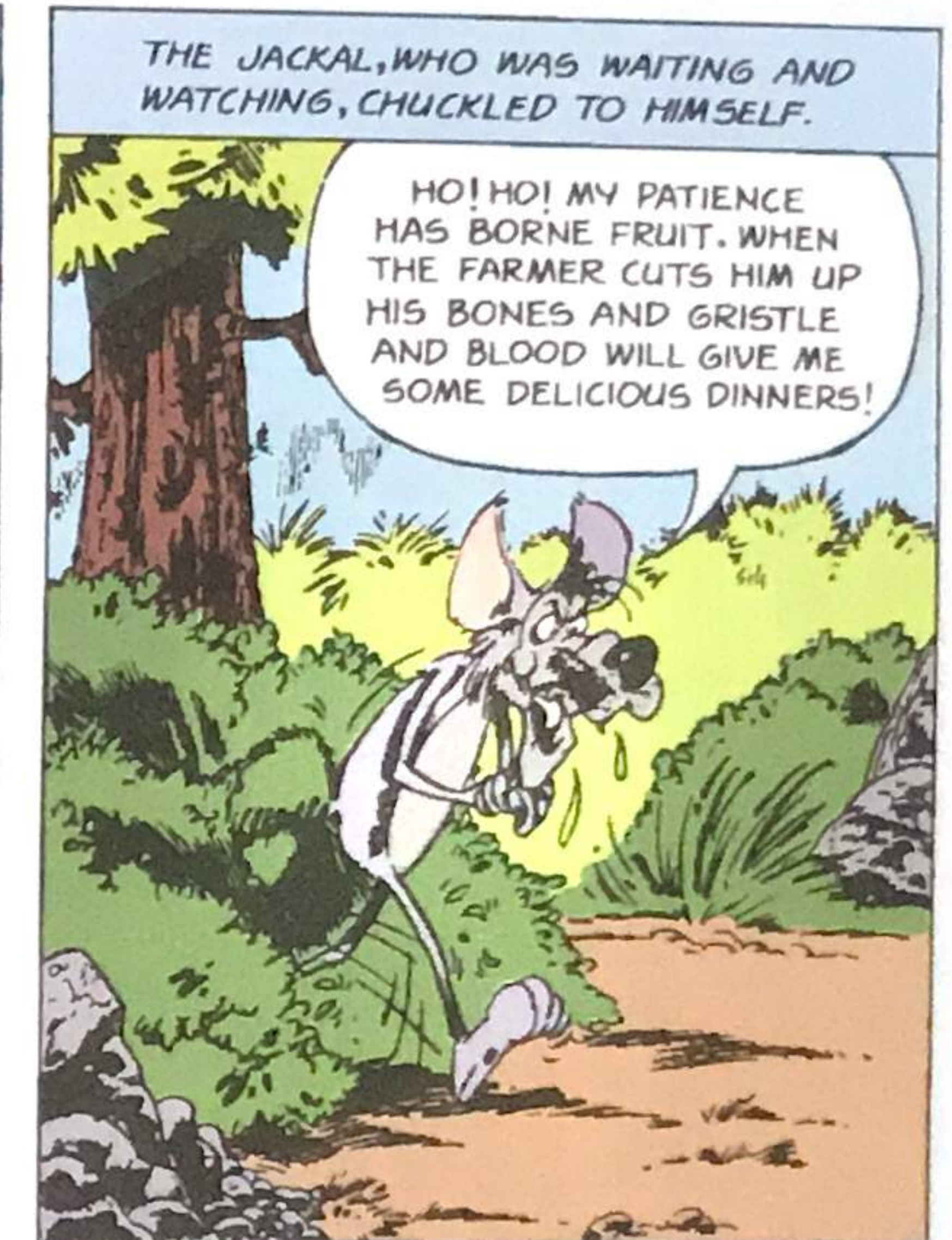
HE SET A SNARE TO CATCH THE DEER.

OH! OH! HELP! I'M TRAPPED. THIS IS THE END OF ME IF MY FRIENDS DON'T COME AND RESCUE ME.



THE JACKAL, WHO WAS WAITING AND WATCHING, CHUCKLED TO HIMSELF.

HO! HO! MY PATIENCE HAS BORNE FRUIT. WHEN THE FARMER CUTS HIM UP HIS BONES AND GRISTLE AND BLOOD WILL GIVE ME SOME DELICIOUS DINNERS!



THE DEER CAUGHT SIGHT OF HIM AND HEAVED A SIGH OF RELIEF.

QUICK! DEAR FRIEND, YOU ARE JUST IN TIME. GNAW AT THIS NET AND FREE ME.



TO HIS DISMAY THE JACKAL REFUSED.

I'M SORRY, MY FRIEND. THIS NET IS MADE OF SINEWS. SINCE I AM FASTING TODAY, I CANNOT BITE THEM. IT WOULD BE A SIN. I'LL COME AND FREE YOU TOMORROW, TO BE SURE.



AND HE WENT AWAY

WHEN THE CROW RETURNED HOME THAT EVENING AND DID NOT SEE HIS FRIEND, HE WAS WORRIED.

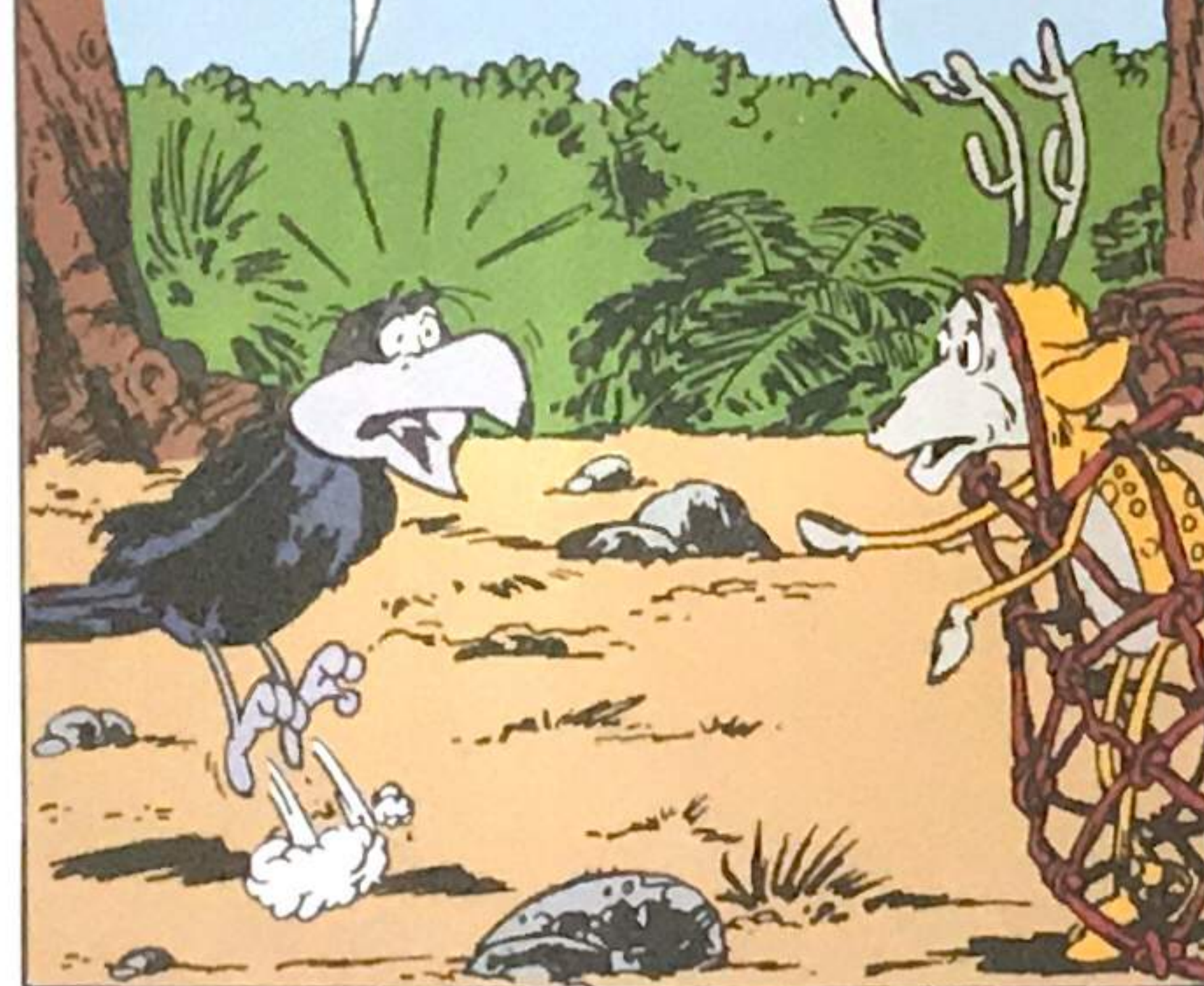
WHERE COULD HE BE? I HOPE HE IS NOT IN DANGER. I STILL DON'T TRUST THAT JACKAL.



AFTER SEARCHING EVERYWHERE FOR HIS FRIEND, HE CAME UPON THE FIELD.

ALAS! MY POOR DEAR FRIEND-HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

THE JACKAL... I SHOULD HAVE TAKEN YOUR ADVICE.



AH! THE TRAITOR! THE SLY KNAVE! WELL, I WARNED YOU.

I KNOW!



NEVER MIND. WHERE IS THAT RASCAL?

HE IS WAITING SOMEWHERE NEAR BY. WAITING TO TASTE MY FLESH. FLY AWAY LEST YOU TOO FALL INTO DANGER.



NO! DEAR FRIEND, I SHALL WAIT WITH YOU TILL THE END. PERHAPS I MIGHT STILL SAVE YOU.



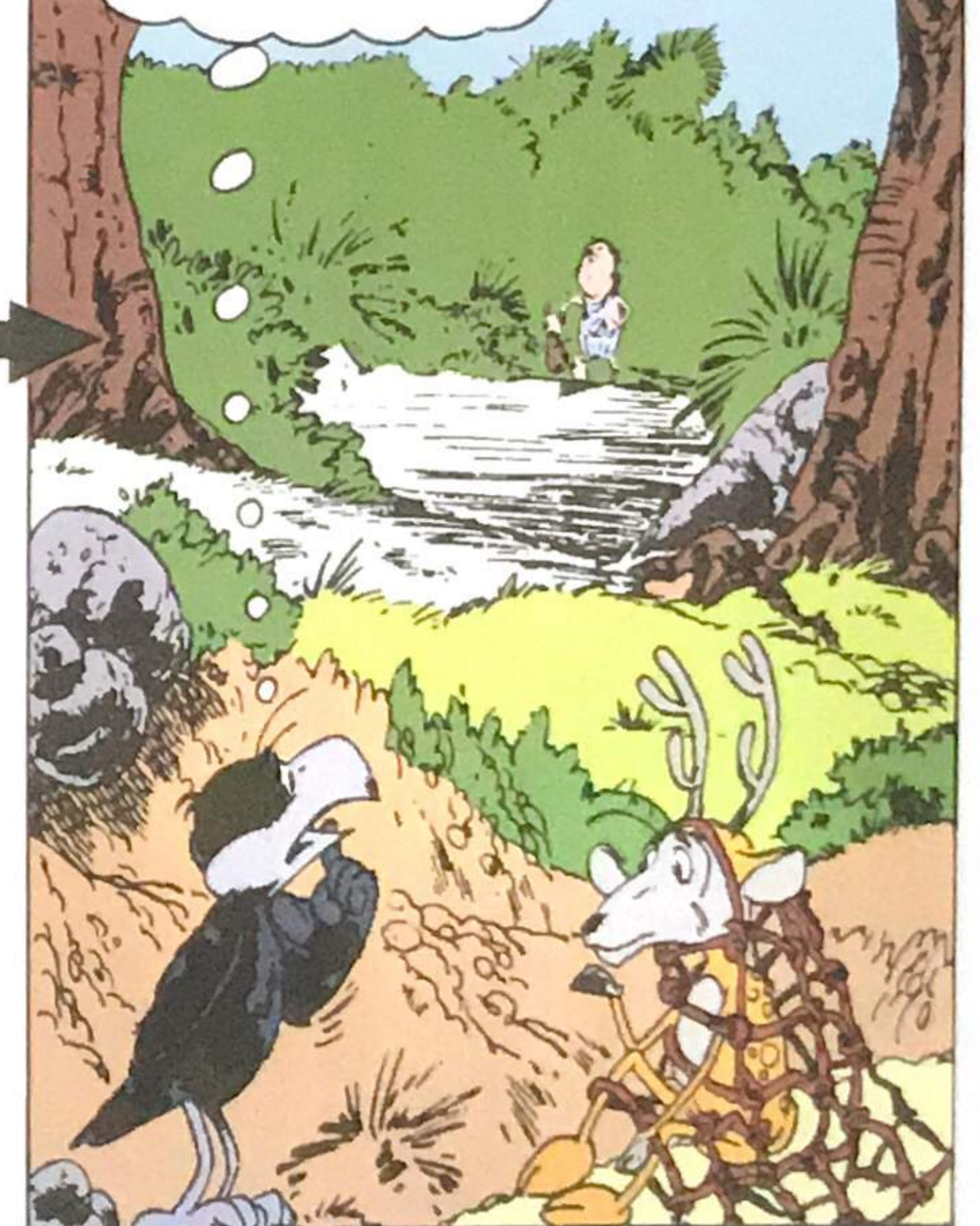
SUDDENLY AN IDEA STRUCK HIM.

I HAVE IT! LIE ON YOUR BACK, PUFF YOUR STOMACH OUT, STIFFEN YOUR LEGS AND BE VERY STILL. I WILL PECK AT YOUR EYES. THEN WHEN I CROAK, SPRING TO YOUR FEET AND RUN FOR YOUR LIFE.



THE CROW RACKED HIS BRAINS BUT COULD FIND NO WAY OUT. AT LAST DAY BROKE.

ALAS! THERE COMES THE FARMER WITH HIS CLUB. IF ONLY I COULD THINK OF SOME MEANS TO SAVE MY FRIEND.

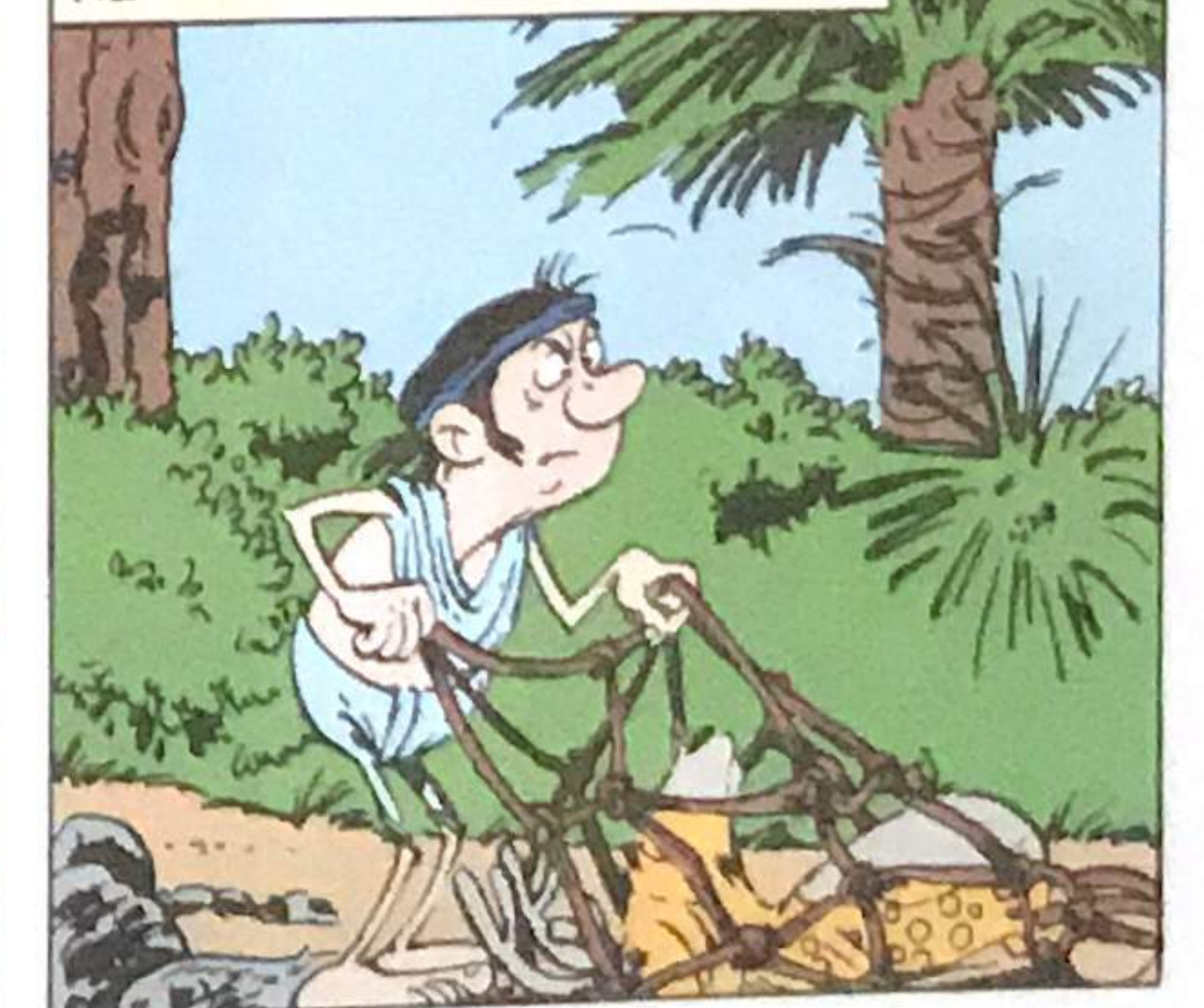


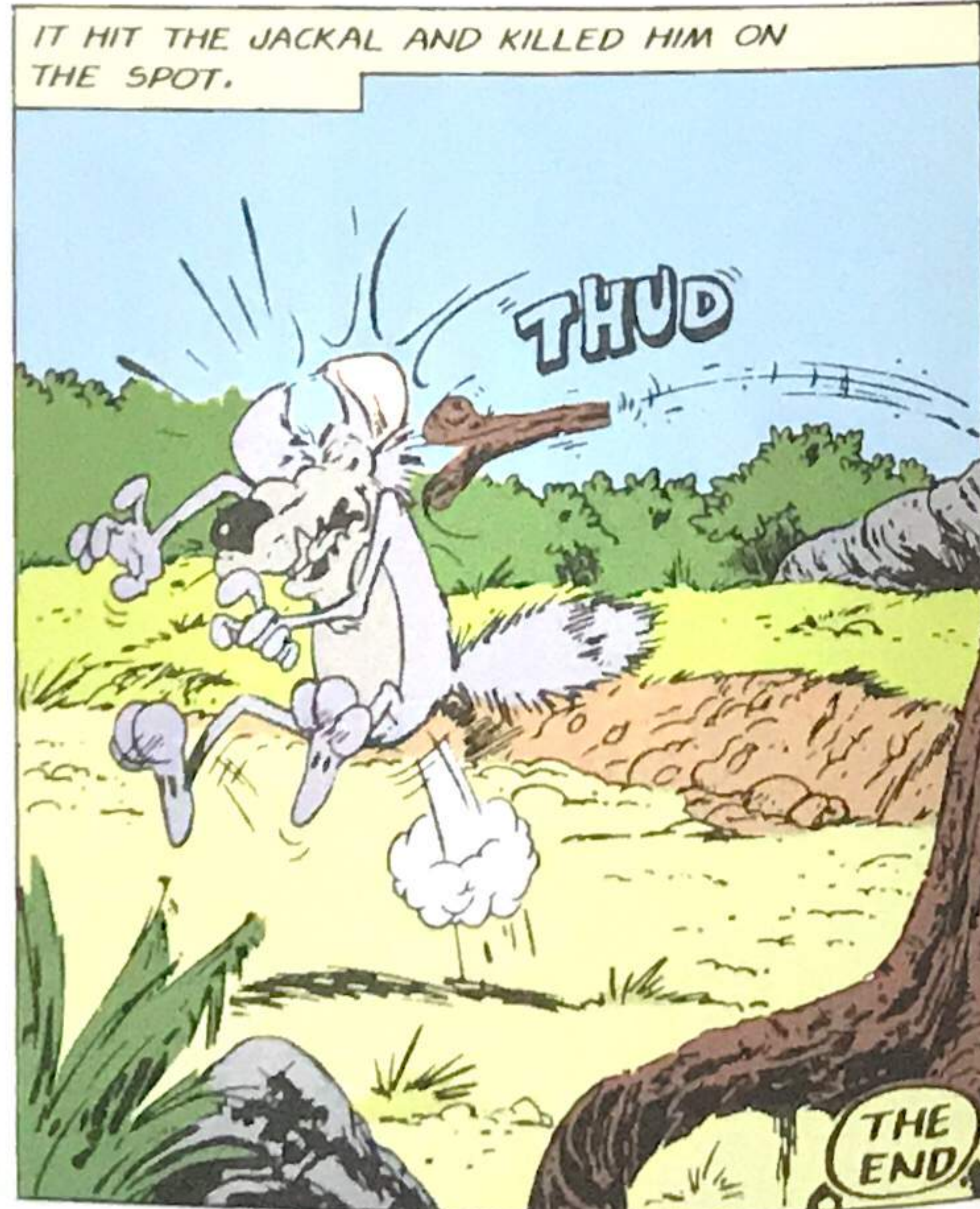
THE DEER DID EXACTLY AS HE WAS TOLD. WHEN THE FARMER CAME UP TO HIM -

AHA! THE FELLOW IS DEAD - OF FRIGHT NO DOUBT. WELL, THAT MAKES MY TASK EASIER.



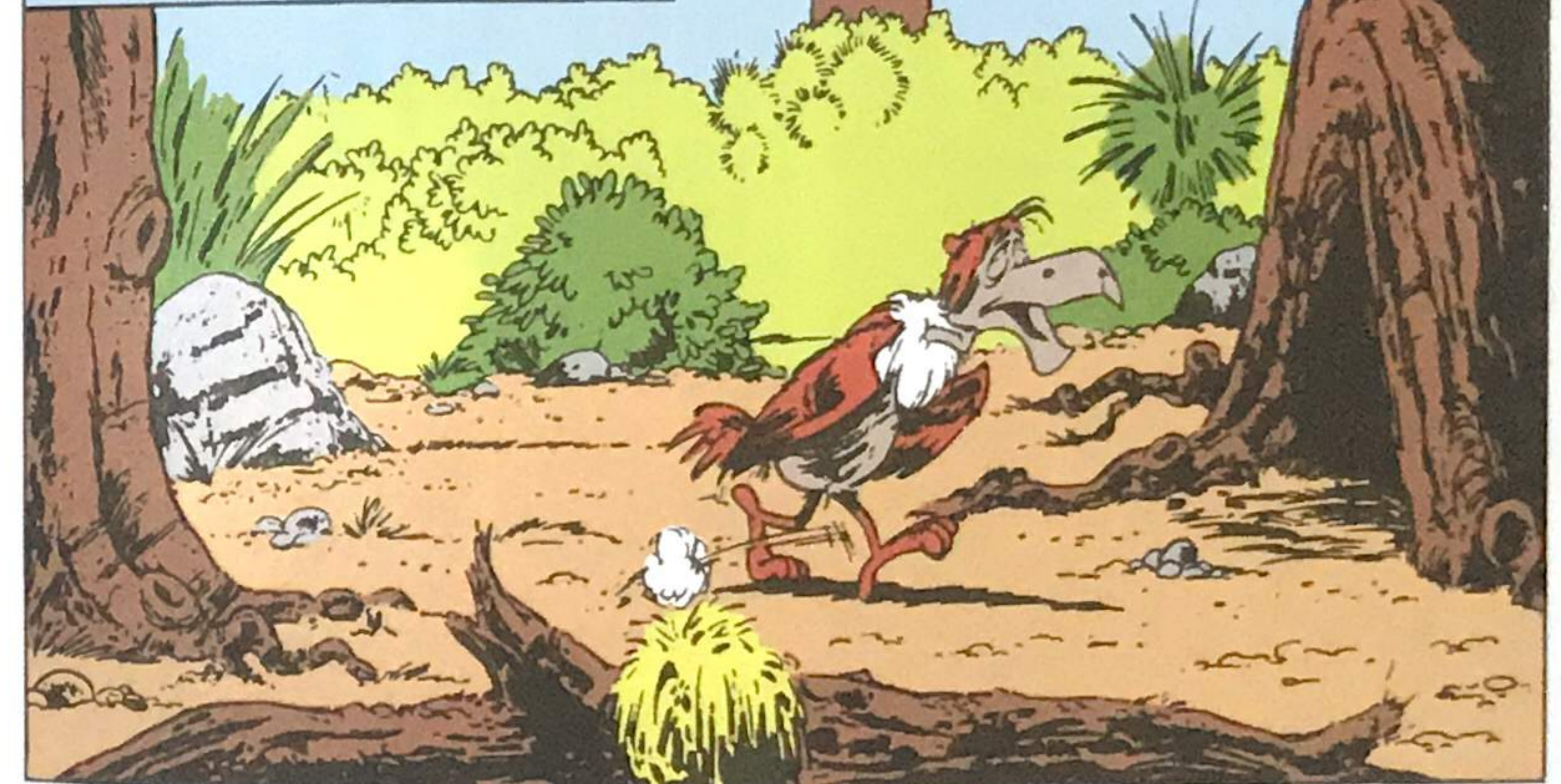
HE BEGAN REMOVING THE NET.





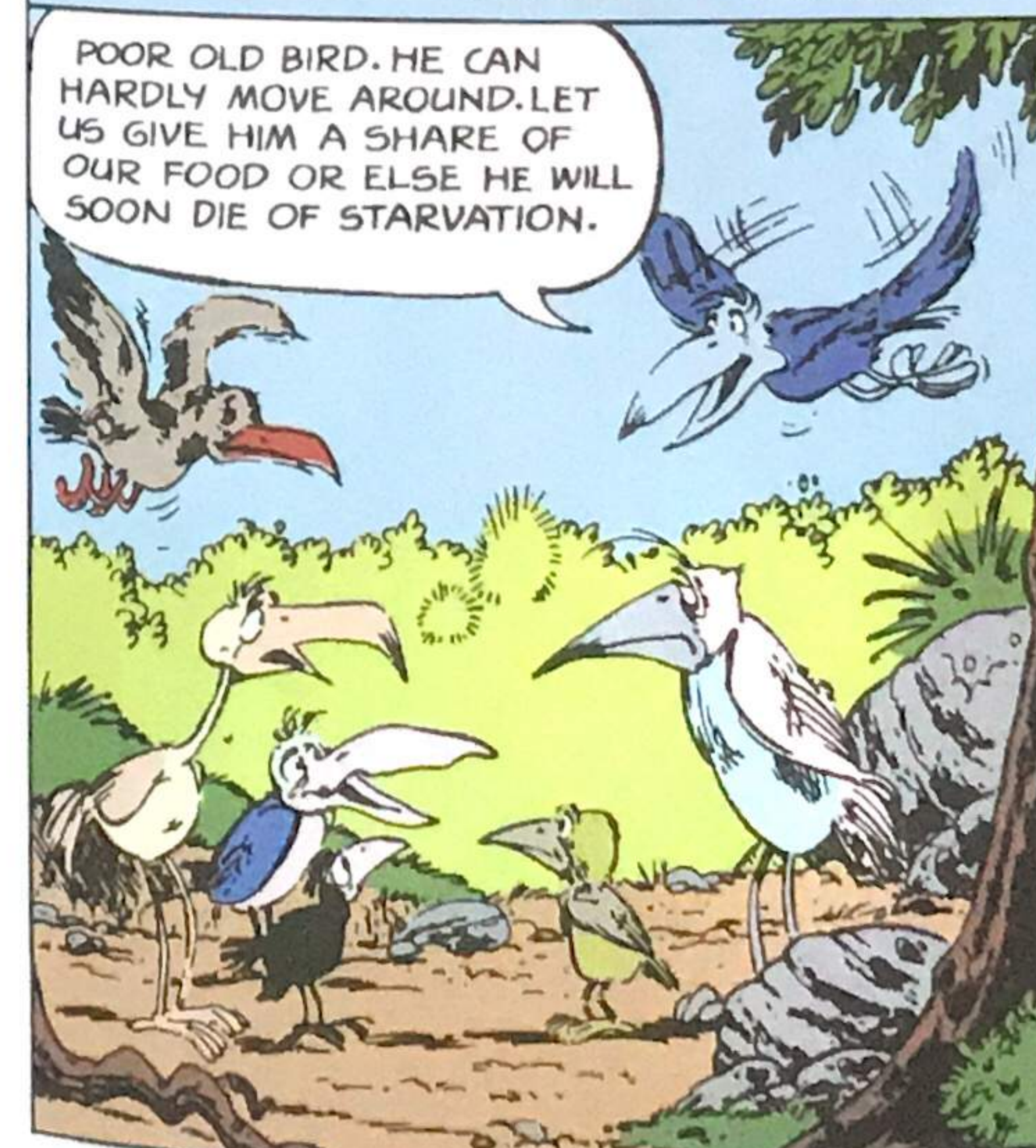
THE VULTURE, THE CAT AND THE BIRDS

ONE DAY A BLIND OLD VULTURE CAME TO LIVE IN THE HOLLOW OF A TREE, WHERE BIRDS ROOSTED AT NIGHT.



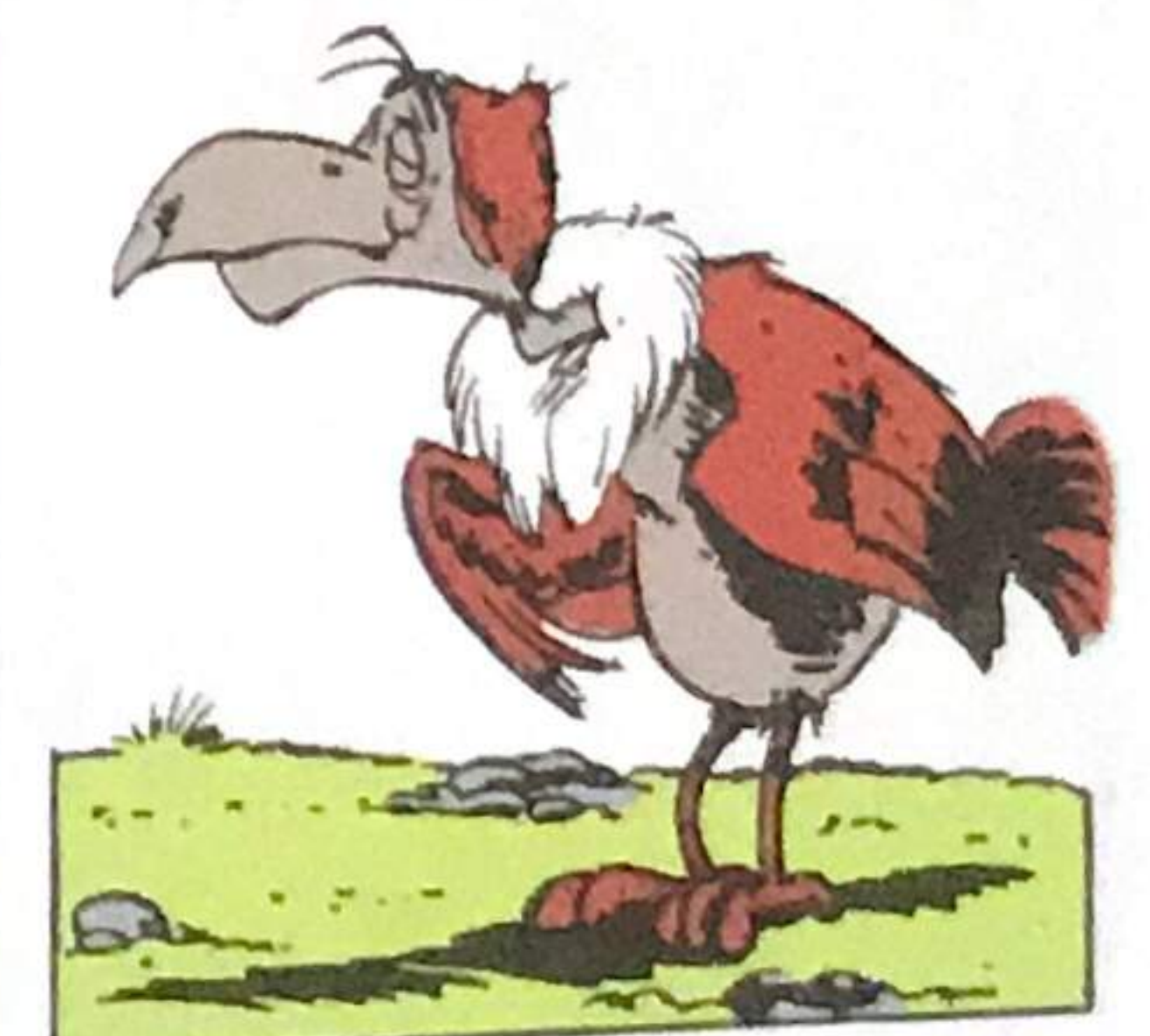
THE BIRDS HELD A HURRIED CONFERENCE.

POOR OLD BIRD. HE CAN HARDLY MOVE AROUND. LET US GIVE HIM A SHARE OF OUR FOOD OR ELSE HE WILL SOON DIE OF STARVATION.



THE OLD VULTURE WAS TOUCHED BY THEIR KINDNESS.

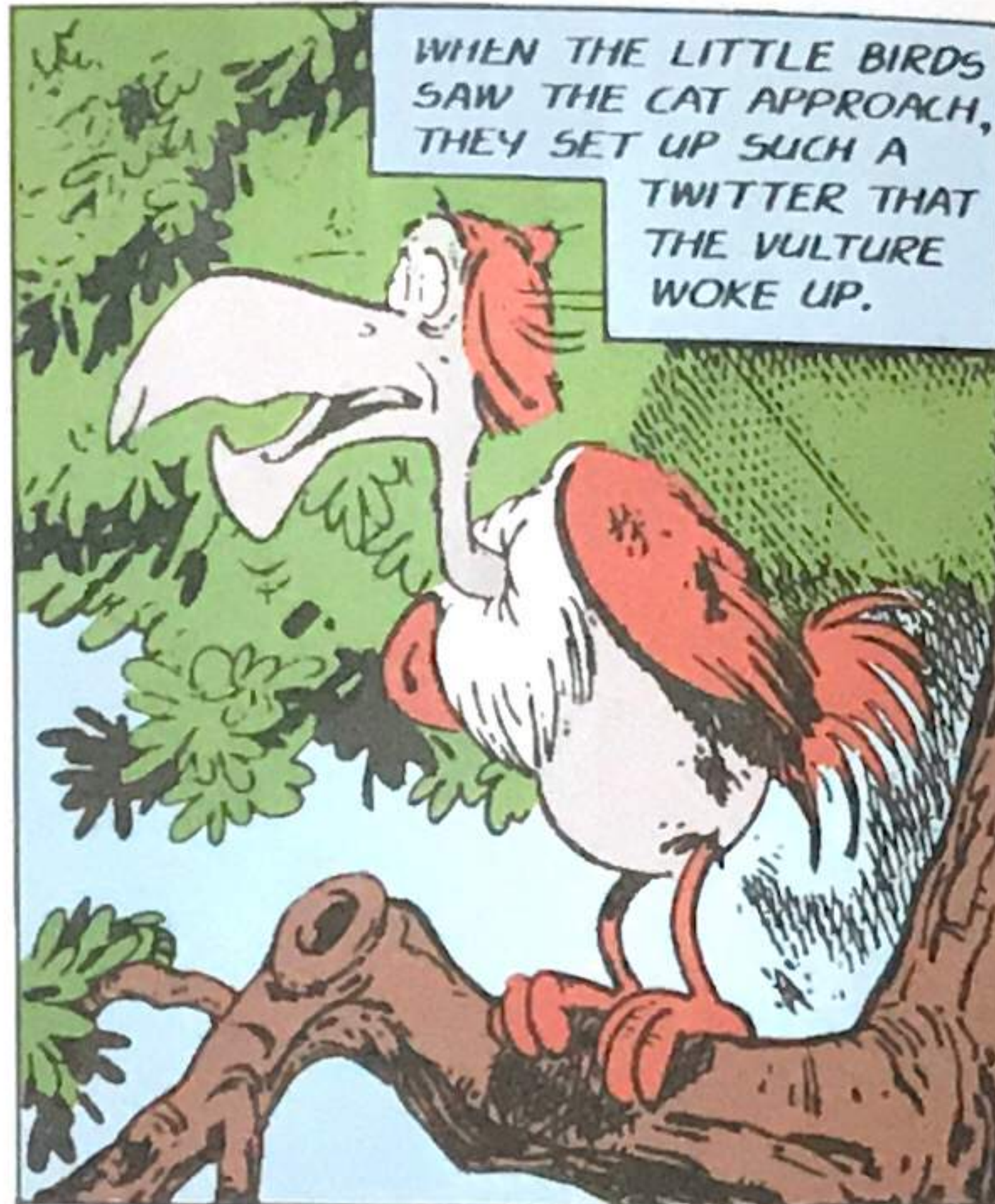
I SHALL MAKE IT MY DUTY TO PROTECT THEIR YOUNG WHEN THEY ARE AWAY GATHERING FOOD.



ONE DAY A CAT HAPPENED TO PASS BY, WHEN THE BIRDS WERE AWAY. HE DID NOT SEE THE VULTURE WHO WAS NAPPING. PERCHED ON A HIGH BRANCH.



AHA! NESTS AND NESTS OF LITTLE FLEDGLINGS. FOOD ENOUGH FOR DAYS AND DAYS.



WHEN THE LITTLE BIRDS SAW THE CAT APPROACH, THEY SET UP SUCH A TWITTER THAT THE VULTURE WOKE UP.

HE SWOOPED DOWN.



WHO GOES THERE?

A VULTURE!
OH! OH!
I'M DONE FOR!

JUST THEN HE NOTICED SOMETHING.

OH! THE FELLOW'S BLIND, AND HIS TALONS BLUNT WITH AGE. WHAT A RELIEF.

WHO GOES THERE, SPEAK UP!



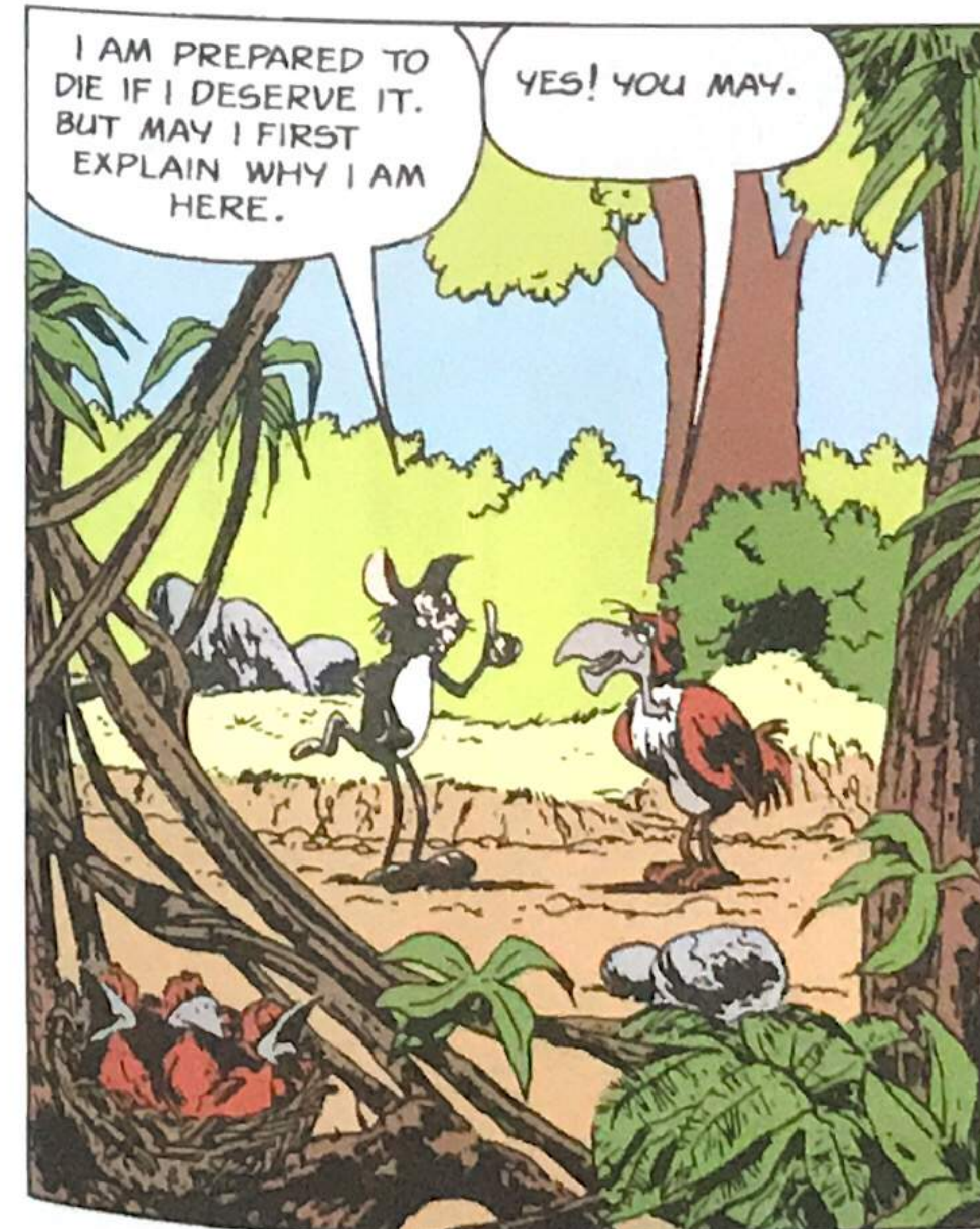
I AM A CAT.

BE OFF! OR I'LL SLAY YOU.



I AM PREPARED TO DIE IF I DESERVE IT. BUT MAY I FIRST EXPLAIN WHY I AM HERE.

YES! YOU MAY.



I LIVE ON THE BANKS OF THE GANGA. THE BIRDS THERE CONSTANTLY SPEAK OF YOUR WISDOM AND YOUR LEARNING. I HAVE COME TO STUDY LAW FROM YOU.

YES. BUT CATS LIKE MEAT AND THERE ARE YOUNG BIRDS HERE. I WILL HAVE TO SLAY YOU.



